KULT

◆ Divinity Lost ◆

GALLERY OF SOULS

Author
Magnus Seter

Author 2020 Noir Version
Petter Nallo

Layout
Petter Nallo

Translation
Mattiaz Fredriksson

Editor
Jacqueline Bryk

Art
Olga Kolesnikova
Daniel Comerci
Krzysiek Poznanski
Olof Nilsson

Additional Art Material
William Adolphe Bouguereau
William Blake

Maps
Stefan Thunberg
Petter Nallo

Invaluable Assistance
Ville Kugelberg

Special Thanks
Red Moon Roleplaying
Torsten Gatu
Marco Behrmann

Characters, locations and incidents are portrayed from the metaphorical viewpoint of the *KULT: Divinity Lost* setting.

GALLERY OF SOULS

I WAS CRAZY, INSANE, I CRAVED WHAT MAN WAS NEVER MEANT TO OWN. But they all had it! Picasso, Vaqueline, Miro, Dali, Munch. They had it, they had the gift! And I so desperately wanted it that I cried out in the darkness of the night. I flung myself into the sea to drown my dreams. But something answered, and I met Her. She showed me the truth. To paint a portrait that goes beyond the flesh, a portrait of the Human Soul. All my dreams came true, but also my nightmares...

Introduction

The Gallery of Souls is a scenario for the horror role-playing game KULT: Divinity Lost. The player characters are sent to find an artist named Christian Starker and escort him to their employer, but find themselves caught between a Death magician and a Lictor instead.

The Setting

This story takes place mainly in Los Angeles, January 1951. The city is chilly and full of fog and the inescapable dampness brought on by constant drizzle.

In the 1950s, LA grows explosively outward, like a child going through growth spurts. It consists of a hectic downtown area, surrounded by huge neighborhoods, each with their own subculture. Show business is everywhere. At night, vertical lights pierce the skies, signaling a movie premiere somewhere on Hollywood Boulevard. The rich and famous live in palaces in the hills. Faces like John Wayne, Katharine Hepburn, Betty Grable and Spencer Tracy cover billboards, posters, and the front pages of newspapers. On Mount Lee, the Hollywood sign reminds everyone just how special this place is.

People flock to the city in huge numbers. Almost everyone you meet came from somewhere else. However, there's also a huge baby boom and the neighbourhoods are awash with kids. Los Angeles claims to have opportunities for everyone, and vast undeveloped spaces wait to be filled with new homes.

But there is a dark side to this city of dreams. People disappear in the anonymous crowd. Life is cheap, and crime and corruption are rampant. It is a city of flesh and hidden lust, and all kinds of perversions lurk behind the facades. Murders are frequent, and the police do not have enough resources to follow the leads. Returning WWII veterans contend with their secret trauma, leading to broken homes. Both the Red and Lavender Scares rip through the city, and people accuse others of being homosexuals or communists before they themselves can be accused. On the outskirts of the city, bare hills bloom with shanty towns of old wooden shacks, still inhabited by people who remember the blood and suffering that the city is built upon.

Theme

Beneath the Glamour: Nothing is what it seems. Los Angeles claims to be the city of hope and dreams (its full name, Ciudad de Los Angeles, literally means "City of The Angels") but beneath the glamour, it has a far uglier face. Starker's paintings show what lies beneath the outward appearances of powerful individuals. In a stylish building in the hills macabre rituals transpire. This scenario explores that which is hidden and disgusting and brings it into the light.

Tips for the Gamemaster

Film Noir: Let this scenario breathe Film Noir. The city is oppressive. Everything is shrouded in an atmosphere of unease, and the glamour is just a thin layer of paint over something rotten. This is a world of dimly-lit bars, gambling dens, rundown studio lots, rainy nights and wet pavement that reflects the street lights. The men are dressed in suits, hats and ties; women in dresses, hats and long gloves. Everyone smokes. People are cynical and self-centred, and redemption always seems to be beyond reach. If you'd like to set the mood with music, look up film noir soundtracks or use dark jazz from bands such as: Bohren & Der Club Of Gore, The Mount Fuji Doomjazz Corporation and The Kilimanjaro Darkjazz Ensemble.

Visceral Horror: This scenario has many gory scenes. Take your time to describe the smell of blood, the slippery floors, and all the grotesqueries present. When the players have left the scene, describe how everything becomes a bit vague -- sort of unclear, as if the city and glamour of LA just wants to cover it up. The Illusion slowly seeps in and makes everything unreal and dreamlike.

Investigation or Action Driven: This scenario can be intense and action-driven, or a slower more investigative story. Optional sections of the scenario suggest where players may get more information for a less fast-paced story. In this case, be more clear that Mr. Pickett gives the player characters some time (say a week) to fulfill their task. He might also ask them to report to him daily. Find the playstyle you want and talk to the players. There's plenty of space for scenes and drama between the characters if you give them some breathing room.

Overview

This is an overview of the scenario and the central scenes.

An Offer They Can't Refuse: In the desert outside of Las Vegas the player characters are forced by their boss Mr. Pickett to find the artist Christian Starker and bring him to Las Vegas.

Meeting in the Park: They go to a park to meet Christian Starker but encounter a damned legionnaire instead that has been sent by Pickett's rival, Mr. Howart.

Starker's Studio: In the studio they find massacred bodies but also clues. They may also encounter one or more of Howart's henchmen.

Starker's Apartment: In the apartment, the player characters find further clues that point to both a private investigator and Rhine Howart. While they are in the apartment a cairath crawls up from the sewers and attacks them.

Roger Moran: The player characters may seek Roger Moran, a private investigator that Starker hired to investigate, and who discovered that Rhine Howart was the one that was after Starker.

Rhine Howart: Rhine Howart is about to offer Starker to a nepharite of Togarini in his ritual chamber beneath his mansion in Beverly Hills.

The End: Depending on the outcome, the player characters might return to Mr. Pickett empty handed or with Starker. What lies ahead for them after that?

EARLIER EDITION OF THE SCENARIO

This scenario was written by Magnus Seter for the second (Swedish) edition of KULT and released in the Gamemaster Screen in 1994. It was called Själarnas Galleri (The Gallery of Souls). It has to our knowledge never been published in English. The original scenario was set in the 1990s and had no premade characters or specific setting. For the KULT: Divinity Lost version we decided to give it more character with a distinct Film Noir vibe, a 1950s LA setting, expanded descriptions and locations as well as pre-made player characters. We also expanded the plot, adding Mr. Pickett as an employer of the Player Characters.

BACKGROUND

Christian Starker moved to Los Angeles as a young man, drawn by the city's glamour and promise of success. He wished to capture the beauty of the city and its inhabitants, to make a name for himself and create works of art that would live through the centuries. However, he couldn't quite make it, and the beauty he tried to capture in his paintings came out bland and soulless. He became obsessed with finding the key that allowed him to see, and paint, the soul of his models -- to find the truth behind the flesh. He studied the ancient masters, took psychology classes, and delved into occultism, but found nothing. He had almost no money, worked pointless jobs, and lived in sheds and run down apartments. His models were homeless, outcasts and prostitutes.

Drunk and despairing, he threw himself from the cliffs at Abalone Cove. He wanted to die, to be swept away by the Pacific and drown together with his dreams. With this final act of sacrifice, when his soul cried out in anguish, something heard him. He washed up on the beach, tangled in seaweed, bruised and cold. He stumbled to his feet, and stood face to face with a beautiful woman. Carita Schiller, the being that would become his muse. Carita was an incarnate of the Archon Tiphareth, created by the very allure and glamour of the City of Angels. Carita filled him with inspiration and granted him the gift he had always sought, to be able to portray the naked human soul.

Success came to him, and along with that, recognition and money. Something else came with it though -- his nightmares turned out to be prophetic. The souls he saw in the people around him shocked and frightened him. So many of them were dark and monstrous. He again sank into despair, and only the few glimpses of unspoiled souls, as well as Carita's allure, kept him alive.

His paintings hung in important art galleries and displayed elements that ordinary people perceived as disturbing and offensive, while those in the know, including our prison's immortal guards, saw that the paintings revealed too much of the truth for Starker to be allowed to continue his works. The lictors in power tried to push Starker out of society and let him ruin himself. They sent their servants to keep watch over him, and at the same time they tried to understand why Tiphareth had blessed him with her touch. What value did she see in this artist sharing her messages?

Starker became frustrated. The critics that panned him, the galleries that refused to display his paintings, his newfound friends that turned their backs on him when he was blacklisted, he nursed a growing bitterness towards them all. What had he done to deserve such a treatment? Starker became aware that he was being followed. He sometimes saw glimpses of the creatures that watched him. He still had allies. Those libertines who weren't afraid of breaking society's rules still bought his paintings. Carita was also by his side, but she was dreamlike and elusive. Sometimes she would be gone for days and weeks, then suddenly appear. He was angry at her, but when she touched him he could do nothing but love her.

On Christmas Eve of 1950, she went away and didn't come back. Starker felt his unseen enemies creeping closer. Unbeknownst to Starker, two powerful characters both decided to move on him: Mr. Howart and Mr. Pickett.

Mr. Howart

Rhine Howart, a Death Magician and worshiper of the Death Angel Togarini, has decided that Starker's soul should fall into the hands of his master. Howart is a passionate art lover, and plans to kidnap Starker and force the artist to paint his portrait. Then he will sacrifice Starker as a gift to a nepharite of Togarini's clergy in exchange for magical insights. He is certain that Starker's soul will be worth it.

When the scenario starts, Howart's servants have kidnapped Starker and brought the artist to his mansion in Beverly Hills. Howart knows from his interrogation of Starker that others, such as Mr. Pickett, wants the artist for themselves. Thus, Howart has decided to set up a trap. He wants no competition.

Mr. Pickett

Emanuel Pickett, a lictor serving the Archon Yesod, has made his seat of power in the newly built gambling town of Las Vegas. His influence over both the mob and the social elite has grown in a short time, and he plans to expand his power. He has sensed the incarnate of Tiphareth, Carita Schiller, and Pickett has devised a plan to bring Starker to Las Vegas, hoping Carita will follow. He wants to bind her to his new domain, where her allure will increase his power and influence. He knows he needs to be careful, the lictors that hold power over Los Angeles won't like this plan, and dealing with an incarnate is always risky.

Mr. Pickett maintains a secret correspondence with Mr. Starker, but time is running out, Carita Schiller has disappeared, and one of Pickett's agents in Los Angeles turned up dead. Luckily, he has a group of expendable people who he'll force to fetch Christian Starker from LA and bring him to Las Vegas. These unfortunate souls are the player characters.

THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

The player characters are handouts at the end of this scenario. Gamemaster and players should read this section together while players select their characters.

January 1951. You are all criminals and swindlers working for Mr. Pickett, a mob boss in Las Vegas. You work at the Sahara Casino making sure that operations run smoothly, that influential guests get whatever they ask for, and that people who try to swindle the casino get the justice they deserve.

Las Vegas is the city of greed and gambling, of dreams and desires of winning it big. You all felt that you deserved more than what life had given you and tried to fool your boss, tried to skim some money off the top. It was supposed to be a foolproof plan, but you were discovered, attacked, and dragged out into the night.

Not only are you at his mercy, so are your loved ones. You can only hope that he will give you one last chance to prove yourselves.

The characters that you may portray are:

Lizabeth Bennet: Failed actress that works as a hostess in the Sahara Casino. Charming, manipulative and the classic Femme Fatale.

Fred Hayden: Gambler, charmer and a man with many lovers and contacts. Always has an ace up his sleeve. Is a well dressed Fixer.

Ray Astor: A violent type, a monster in a suit, who makes sure that those that cross the mob get beaten up or killed. He is a powerful Mob Enforcer.

George Stevenson: British immigrant that served in both World Wars. Has an occult interest. Works as an Accountant for the Mob Boss.

After the players pick characters, hand them out and let them have the time to read them and present them to each other.

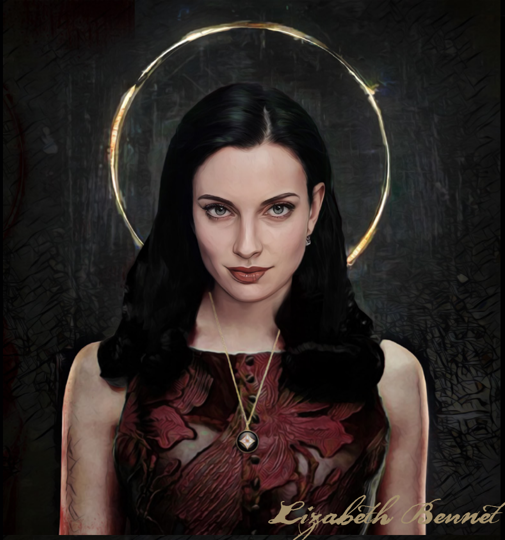
Disadvantages

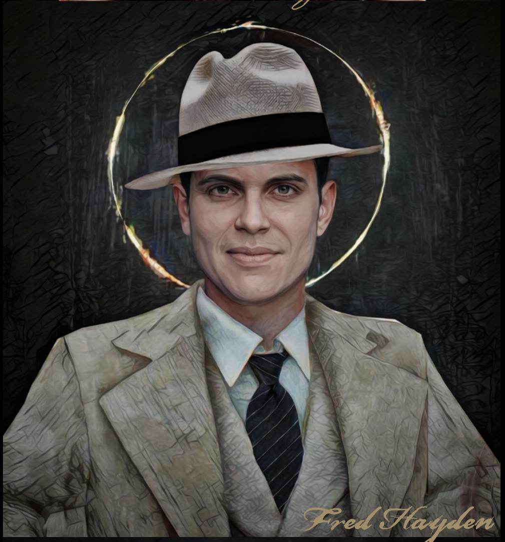
Three of them need to roll for their Disadvantages:

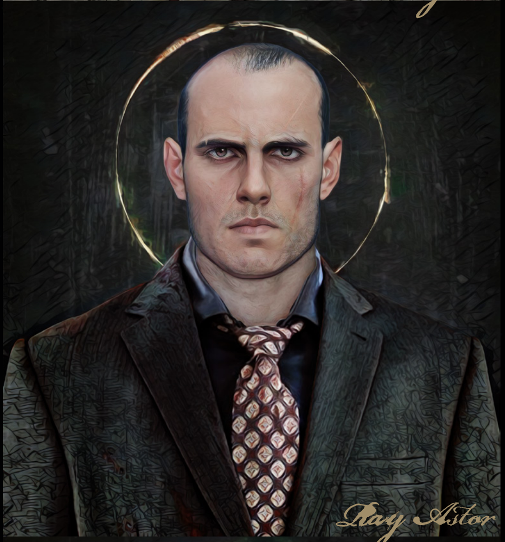
- Condemned - George Stevenson
- Guilt - Ray Astor
- Object of Desire - Lizabeth Bennet

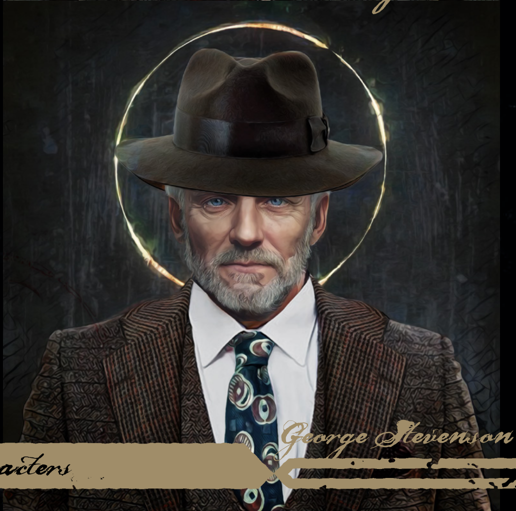
Stability Loss

Each of them (except Lizabeth Bennet, due to her advantage **Endure Trauma**) must reduce their **Stability** (-**1**) from *Composed* to *Uneasy*.









AN OFFER THEY CAN'T REFUSE

It's hard to breathe. Your heads are covered in chicken feed sacks, your mouths are gagged, and you haven't had a drink of water for hours. Ropes cut into your wrists and you are sore after being kicked and beaten by your boss's henchmen. Door opens, hands grab you violently and drag you out from the back of the truck. They force you to kneel in the sand.

This is the place the mob takes you to die. In 1951, in the wilds outside Las Vegas, life is cheap and few will weep over you. Perhaps your deaths will be a warning to other lowlifes that try to trick the mob. You just hope that it will be quick. This is a place where bodies are buried in shallow graves. Scorpions, vultures, coyotes, and foul things of the desert will strip the flesh from your bones.

You know why you are here. You were greedy and got caught. Mr. Pickett, your employer, must have found out that you were skimming money from the casino.

You hear a car approaching, doors opening and closing, and footsteps approaching. The bags are pulled from your heads. You are blinded by the morning sun. And then you see him. Mr. Pickett, a skeleton of a man, thin and menacing, dressed in a perfect striped suit, with a black hat and sunglasses. His goons stand next to him with tommy guns in their hands, ready to mow you down.

He speaks. His voice is dry as sandpaper:

"You have all betrayed me. And you deserve nothing more than a bullet. But I hate wasting resources that have potential. So, I will give you a chance to redeem yourself.

There is a painter in Los Angeles, Christian Starker. I want you to bring him to me. He has a remarkable talent. Some would say that it is not of this world, and in this they are right. I have arranged a meeting with him, and you will go as my representatives.

Try to escape, or betray me again, and I will not only find you, but those you love will pay the price while you watch. Remember that the people you care about are in my hands. I don't want to punish them for your wrongdoings. But if you fail me in this, I will.

Meet up with Mr. Starker, and bring him to me. He might resist, or there might be others looking for him. You might see or experience strange things. None of this is of any consequence. Do not return without him. He must be alive."

He nods to one of his henchmen who pulls a letter from his coat pocket, and puts it on the ground. On top of it, to weigh it down, he places a folding knife.

"The address and time of the arranged meeting."

Mr. Pickett nods a perfunctory farewell. He and his men go back to their cars, start their engines, and drive away leaving a trail of dust. One car is left behind for you.

What do you do?

Getting Free

Getting free of the ropes and gags takes some time, but with the folding knife the player characters can free themselves. All their belongings are in the backside of the car -- if Ray Astor is in the scenario it is his car.

It is just after 8 in the morning, Thursday, January 18th 1951. They are 13 miles west of Las Vegas (21 kilometers).

Defying Mr. Pickett and Returning to Las Vegas

If the player characters return to try to save their loved ones, Mr. Pickett will murder one of their relatives, for example one of George's children (**Stability** loss of **-4** for George and **-2** for the rest of the characters), as a final warning. Then he will try to murder the player characters themselves. But at this point the scenario has probably derailed enough, so it might be good to end it unless you are enjoying yourself.

Reading the Letter

The characters will probably pick up the letter from the sand.

It is addressed to Mr Samuel Stone, 2535 S Las Vegas Blvd, Las Vegas, NV.

George and Lizabeth know that Samuel Stone is one of Mr. Pickett's many aliases.

Judging by the postmark, the letter was posted the day before yesterday in Los Angeles. The message is carelessly folded and has splashes of some kind of red paint. The writing is weak and the letters are shaky. It was obviously written by a troubled individual. [**See Handout #1.**]

Mr Stone,

I now know you see the same things I do. I will leave Los Angeles soon as I've sold off some of my paintings. We can meet, but we need to be careful. I am certain that I am being watched. Meet me at the boathouse in Somerset Park 9 PM, Thursday, January 18th. There we can talk undisturbed.

You can also contact me at the telephone number below, but I advise you to use it only in extreme emergencies.

Christian Starker

ST 78-8738

Investigating the Letter

The message itself contains some clues for the characters. The red spots are paint, even if anxious characters might think they are something else. The paper has a distinct tobacco smell. Anyone with specialized knowledge of tobacco immediately knows that it is a very rare Turkish brand that is difficult to get hold of in the city.

If the characters call the attached phone number, no one will answer. If they look it up in a Los Angeles phonebook, they find that it goes to an art studio in Sherman Oaks.

It turns out to be impossible to find out the artist's home address. He is not registered in the phone book.

The message is written on cheap paper and in common black ink, probably from a ballpoint pen.

The introduction above gives the player characters several opportunities. The obvious choice would be to go to the meeting in the park, but suspicious characters might guess it's a trap. Another idea is to go straight to Starker's studio, hoping he's there.

Investigating Starker

Starker is referenced in many press clippings from various newspapers and magazines. They are available at every major library in LA. Some gallery owners may also have information about him in their newspaper archives.

The articles describe an artist who has long struggled to find his unique style. His early works were, at best, mediocre and he seemed doomed to sink into the bottomless sea of obscurity.

Two years ago, everything suddenly changed. Starker became something of an overnight celebrity with astonishing and terrifying works of art. Viewers said his bizarre portraits captured the soul of the subject, instead of the face they wanted to show. This, of course, created controversy, as he portrayed leading politicians and businessmen as insidious monsters. This led him to be banned from all the country's finer museums and he was accused of being a communist.

But his vision was stronger than the blacklisting and he continued to paint, mainly for private galleries. His paintings now go for very large sums at auctions.

Heading for Los Angeles

It is a five hour drive to Los Angeles from the outskirts of Las Vegas, so if the player characters go there directly, they have quite a few hours before the meeting in the evening. They are also hungry, thirsty, injured, and exhausted. There is time to eat, get a hotel room, and also investigate Starker.

MEETING IN THE PARK

Somerset Park closes at 8pm. This poses a small problem for the characters, which they can solve in various ways. The fence can easily be climbed and player characters with suitable skills should be able to pick the lock of the gate.

Loud solutions, such as shooting the lock with a gun, attract the attention of the guards and, should it become necessary, also the police.

1. Park Gate

The park is surrounded by a two meter high fence with large loops of barbed wire at the top. The gate is made of wrought iron and depicts an idyllic park.

2. Janitorial Shed

This is a small shed where the caretaker stays during the day and the park guards at night. Some simple garden tools are also stored here, such as rakes and lawn mowers. The park is guarded at night by two guards. They are not armed with guns and will contact the police if anything serious happens.

3. The Playground

A delightful playground for the little ones. It contains a slide, a swing set and a carousel. In the middle of the playground is a climbing-friendly wooden castle.

4. The Garden

The park also offers its visitors a small well-kept garden. However, it is kept closed at this time of year and all the flowers are dead.

5. Lake

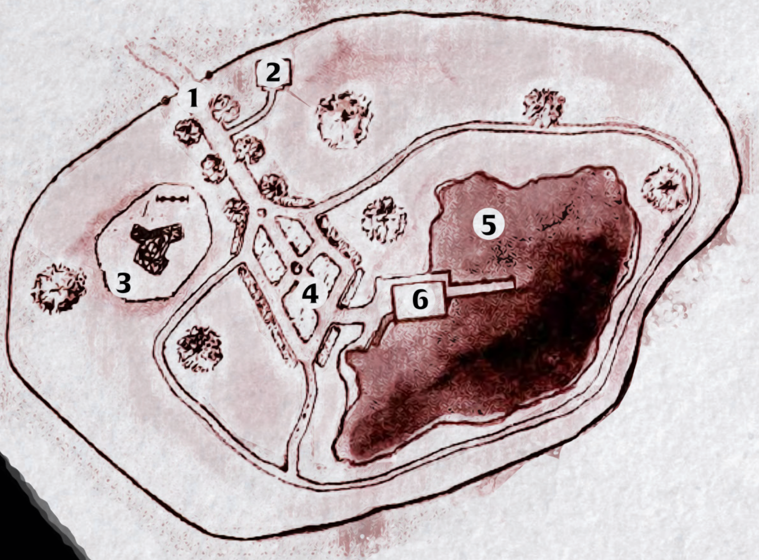
The lake is quite small, but still home to a considerable number of species of fish and turtles. There is a footpath along the water's edge. For the safety of visitors, the lake is not more than one meter deep, except in the middle where the depth amounts to about three meters.

6. The Boathouse

The boathouse is slightly larger than the garden shed. It includes a café and storage for rental boats. There are currently three boats in the boathouse. Next to the boats are stacked café chairs.

7. The Pier

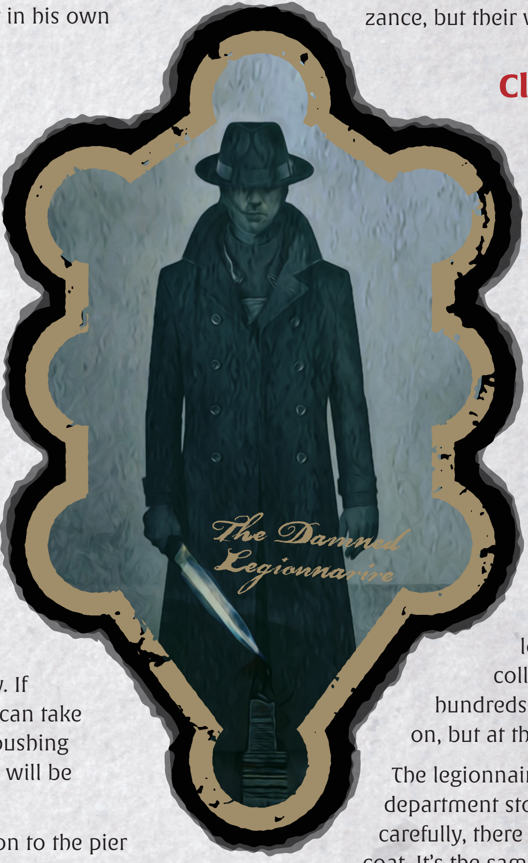
The pier extends about a third of the length of the lake. It is made of wood and is moored at the boathouse with coarse chains. It is about a meter wide.



The Damned Legionnaire

When the player characters arrive, night has fallen and the sky is covered with rain clouds. This event is lit up by distant lightning and a light rain begins to fall on the characters. It is difficult to see in the dark and they do not notice the boathouse until it slowly appears in the night. The pier extends from the boathouse and is covered in fog.

The players suddenly hear a scraping sound through the fog, metal against metal. This is followed by a rattling of chains as someone steps out on the pier. The player characters now see the silhouette of a man in a long coat and hat standing at the far end of the pier. He seems to be staring out at the water, as if lost in his own thoughts.



Although the characters may hope that this is Starker, it is in fact not. Starker has been abducted, but Starker's kidnappers have sent someone else to receive the player characters, albeit in their very own way...

On the pier stands one of the damned legionnaires. He waits patiently for the characters to take the first step. He has orders to kill or maim them and will attack as soon as they get a bit onto the pier. Then he will turn around with his hands in his coat pockets, slowly going to meet the characters, trying to get as close to them as possible before he attacks. If the characters seem reluctant to get out on the pier, he will wave encouragingly. If he can get them out on the pier, he can take on the PCs one by one, potentially pushing some out into the water where they will be vulnerable.

Should the characters refuse to get on to the pier and express doubts whether he is Starker, the legionnaire will still attack to make the best of the situation. He will fight to the bitter end. Should the characters somehow manage to escape the legionnaire, he will then do everything to track them down and complete his mission. In that case, he can appear as a surprise whenever the story loses steam. A good event in which to end the fight is that the legionnaire falls into the lake, especially if the Gamemaster wants to tone down the supernatural elements in the beginning of the scenario - by examining its body they will understand that something is clearly not right.

Interference from the police

Firing guns will get the guards' attention, leading them to call the police. The police are on site within ten minutes. If combat is still ongoing, they will first try to calm down the combatants and get them to surrender. The legionnaire, however, does not allow himself to be talked down, instead opting to flee into the water; disappearing mysteriously.

Should any of the characters remain, they will be brought in for questioning. If they have a license for their weapons (which George does but none of the others), they will be taken in for questioning regarding their illegal weaponry. They are eventually released on their own recognizance, but their weapons are confiscated.

Clues from the park

If the legionnaire is defeated, the characters can gain some clues by examining his possessions.

First of all, his sword: a short Roman sword. It looks like a replica gladius, like the swords used in the sword and sandal movies of the time. George can quickly identify it. If the PCs turn to a museum, the characters also get to know that the weapon is in very good condition and thus an excellent antique; it can probably be sold at a very high price. Should the characters begin looking for prominent weapon collectors, this will lead to a list with hundreds of names. It might be useful later on, but at this point will be rather useless.

The legionnaire's clothes are from regular department store brands. If they are examined carefully, there are fresh paint stains on the coat. It's the same paint as on the message to the characters. The last clue is the legionnaire himself. Although the characters can hardly bring the body with them, George could use his **Occult Studies** to know vague tales about cults worshipping dark powers beyond our world and that sometimes servants step through from those worlds and walk among us. Some of these servants are said to be soldiers that died in war but still fight on. This should give the characters an idea of what they're up against.

STARKER'S STUDIO

Sooner or later, the characters will visit Starker's studio. It is located in the neighborhood of Sherman Oaks. The studio consists of a small house, open to the public, that has been rebuilt to meet Starker's new artistic needs. It also serves as a small gallery for his private art collection. It's surrounded by an unkempt flower garden.

The Driver Keeping Watch

If the characters are on guard as they approach the house and **Observe the Situation** they can notice a parked Dodge Kingsway a little further up the street. Should they pass the Dodge, they will see a man inside wearing a long overcoat, just like the man who assaulted them in the park. They also see that the car lacks license plates. This is not a damned legionnaire but one of Howart's henchmen. If they watch the car for a while, a gray Chrysler Windsor drives up next to it. This car also lacks registration plates. The man in the Dodge steps out and changes seats with one of the Chrysler 's passengers. Both men are dressed in exactly the same overcoats and they wear fedoras. Apparently someone is keeping the studio under surveillance.

If the PCs follow the car that drives away, there is a chance that they are spotted by the suspicious driver (**Act Under Pressure** to remain undetected). If they are, the driver will stop at a bar, call Howart, and notify him that he has been discovered. Howart will send four more men with tommy guns to set up an ambush and the driver will try to lead the player characters into it. If they are not discovered, they can follow the driver to Howart's home in Beverly Hills.

There aren't many pedestrians in this area, so the driver is aware of anyone approaching and ready to drive away. If they manage to approach the man, he will pretend not to understand English. If they insist on their questions, the man will open the car door, step out, and brandish a stiletto at the characters, telling them to fuck off in a scorched voice. If they do not obey him, he will not hesitate to stab one of them and pull his revolver. Should there be a fight, the police will be on site within five minutes and arrest the perpetrators -- which probably means the characters as well as the villains.

If characters search the car, they will only find newspapers, old leftovers and an empty notepad. There is nothing that links the vehicle to any address or owner. If the man is questioned, he reveals nothing. He swears that he does not know who murdered the people there.

Outside the Studio

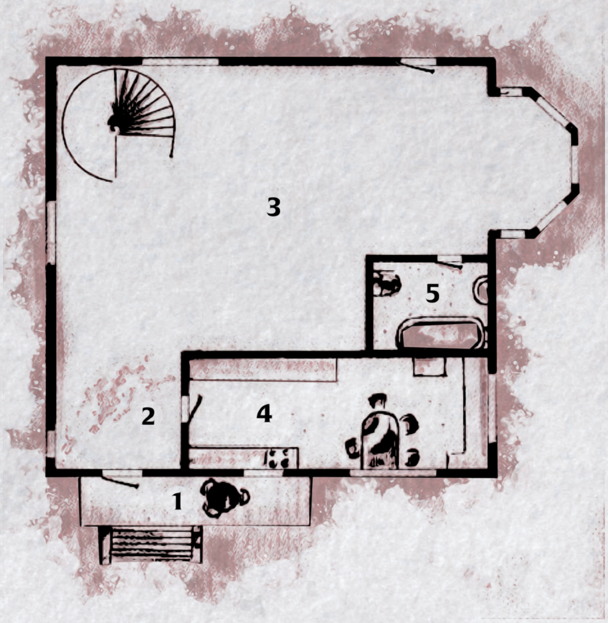
Arriving at the studio, the PCs discover that the main entrance is locked and the curtains are drawn. If they examine the back, they will find an open door. A closer inspection of the back door's lock reveals that it has been forced open. They may also find that the grass and ground in the back is pressed down as if something massive, like an ox, was dragged across it. Most other traces have been washed away in the rain but if the PCs take time to examine the drag marks they may find human hair, and that the earth is soaked with blood. The drag marks lead through the bushes to a back street and sewer cover. If they open the grate they will find remnants of human skin, hair and blood that has been scraped off. It is as if bodies have been dumped into the sewers, or that something big and fleshy has pressed itself down here. These are traces of the cairath -- a creature that Howart summoned to feast on the bodies.

What Happened in the Studio

Rhine Howart sent his two damned legionnaires to kidnap Starker during a private viewing of his gallery. In order not to leave any witnesses, the legionnaires slaughtered the guests. They grabbed Starker and took him with them to Howart's estate. To get rid of the bodies, Howart called upon a bound cairath, a creature from the Underworld. It crawled up a sewer drain and consumed the bodies of the dead guests, melting them into its form, then crawled, swollen and twice as big, back into the deep. After this Howart sent one of his men to keep watch for any more visitors -- such as the player characters.

Inside the House

Upon entering the house, the characters are overwhelmed by a nauseating stench, similar to that of an abattoir. Keep in mind that this is meant to make a deeply unpleasant impression on the characters. Wherever they look there is melting human fat, flies, and blood. The stench of death and devastation gets underneath their skins. Staying in this house of death will require characters to **Keep it Together**. If they do not pass, they become severely nauseous and have difficulty staying in the house. They may even become panicked.



DOWNSTAIRS

1. The Porch

On the porch are two folding chairs and a small table with a glass of stale champagne. If they examine the porch, the characters will find traces of blood that leaked out from underneath the door. It is dried up. An unpleasant odor seeps out from under the door.

2. The Hall

The hall is smeared with partly dried blood and sewage water. The stench is unbearable and thousands of flies take off from the blood and slabs of flesh that remain. The droning, buzzing, humming sound is deafening, and the flies do not calm down until the characters leave. A dress, once glamorous and now thoroughly destroyed, lies on the floor and has soaked up some of the blood.

3. The Gallery

The gallery is in the same condition as the hall with flies everywhere. The walls are drenched with blood and other bodily fluids. A large group of people must have been massacred here, but there are no bodies. There is much blood, and in it you find broken glass, strips of cloth, a woman's shoe, a pack of cigarettes, a wine bottle, an expensive bracelet, and some slabs of flesh. There are strange drag marks from the back door that have moved across the room, as if a giant snail or slug moved across the floor, smearing blood and sewage everywhere. Here and there in the drag marks are grains of black volcanic sand. These are traces of the cairath. The volcanic sand originates from Howart's temple, where he summoned it.

On the staircase, there is a severed hand that lies curled up like a dead spider. It has painted nails and a luxurious ring on one finger. The hand is cleanly severed at the wrist.

The paintings on display all express the same despair that Starker suffered since his bout of inspiration began. Most of the works are from unknown artists, though some were made by Starker himself.

Starker's own paintings are the most interesting. Most have been removed and the few that remain are all from his early period, before he developed his mastery. An art expert would find the technique excellent, but the paintings soulless. These paintings, like all other works of art, have been left undamaged.

4. The Kitchen

The kitchen is relatively unscathed. The counter is spotted with dried blood, and some knives are missing from a knife stand. The sink has been clogged with blood and hair, as if someone had washed it off there after the horrific murders.

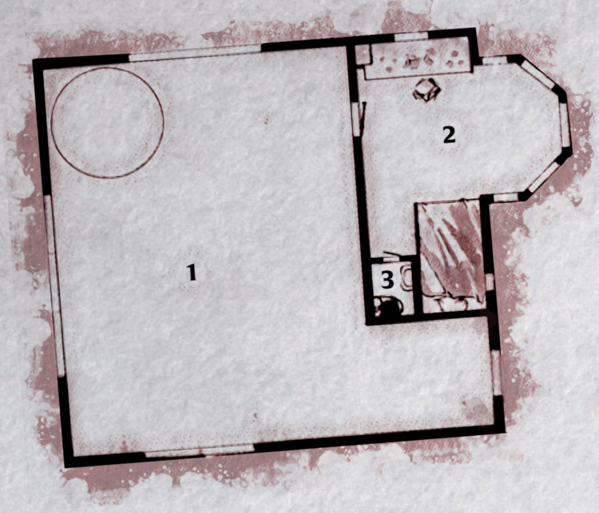
5. The Bathroom

The large bathroom contains a huge clawfoot bathtub, a toilet and a sink. The floor is covered with blood and excrement. A man stands bent over the bathtub. He is dressed as if he had been attending a party with a loose bow tie, a white shirt drenched in blood, and black tuxedo trousers. His jacket is draped over the sink. He has his back to the characters, and is completely engrossed in what is in the bathtub. He takes no notice of the characters until they enter the bathroom.

When they do, he will quickly turn around and brandish a kitchen knife. His face is covered in blood and he has a pencil stuck right through one of his eyes. Blood seeps from his mouth as he approaches the characters with a maniacal smile and whispers; "I will offer you to the great devourer." He will attack without regard to his own life and fight to the death.

In the bathtub is the body of a young woman. She has been skinned with great expertise, probably alive since her face is frozen in a silent scream. Her eyes are gone and her teeth are almost unnaturally pearly white against her red flesh. Her skin is nowhere to be seen (the man consumed it in small pieces). Should anyone want to use the toilet, it is full of flies gathered around the eyes of the skinned woman.

The man and woman were guests at the party and they hid in the bathroom when the slaughter began. When the cairath entered the building, the man ended up under its influence. In his fear and madness, he saw it as a god and skinned his young trophy wife as an offering. She managed to ram his pen into his eye, but that did not stop him.



UPSTAIRS

1. The Studio

This airy, spacious room was at the heart of Starker's creative process. Here he painted his masterpieces, and here he cried out into the night and sold his soul. This room is untouched by the slaughter, except for a pair of bloody footprints (from one of the damned legionnaires). The room is sparsely and darkly furnished with only a few stools and some painting equipment. Starker's brushes and palette are on the floor. The paint on the palette corresponds to that on the message and on the legionnaire's clothes. In a corner filled with pillows there is a hookah that smells of Turkish tobacco. All the paintings once stored here have been taken, but if the player characters examine the room carefully, they will find a small secret closet. There are some unfinished paintings and some sketches that Starker had intended to destroy. The paintings are portraits of different people. Some are grotesquely distorted, while others radiate a wonderful purity. Some paintings are marked with name tags. One of these paintings is of a woman with an almost angelic beauty. It is unfinished but still a masterpiece. This is a painting of Carita Schiller, Starker's muse.

2. The Bedroom

The bedroom also serves as Starker's office and contains both a bed and a desk. The room is messy but has been left alone by the intruders. The desk is covered with paper and some of Starker's private letters. There is also a stack of the cheap typing paper used for Starker's letter at the beginning of the scenario. Next to this is a bottle of ink and a fountain pen. There is also a telephone on the desk. The wardrobes contain both Starker's clothes and a woman's. The clothes are of the latest fashion.

3. The Toilet

A small room occupied by a toilet and a sink. The room is clean and unoccupied.

Leaving the studio

If the characters overtly enter or leave the studio via the main entrance, they notice that the Dodge leaves as they step out onto the porch. The man in the driver's seat is alone in the vehicle. He keeps an eye on the house through the rearview mirrors.

Clues in the studio

The studio holds a wealth of clues for the characters.

Letterhead and Ink

Shows that Starker himself had indeed written the letter to Mr. Pickett. If they compare the letters on Starker's desk with each other, the characters notice that the handwriting from the letter to their boss corresponds to the style on an unsent letter from Starker.

Black sand and gravel

In the studio where the carnage took place, and at the sewer entrance, there are grains and gravel of black basalt. Volcanic rock and sand that are not common close to LA. This is from the cairath, stuck in its flesh, and scraped off. It will not mean anything to the characters now but they might realize its origin when they enter Howart's temple.

Letters

The letters that were not written by Starker have greater significance. There are a lot of them: orders of portrait paintings, thanks for a job well done, death threats, rejection letters from art galleries, private letters from former friends that they can't be seen with him anymore since he is a suspected communist, notifications that he has been sued and should appear at court in February. Below are clues that the player finds if they investigate the letters:

Some of the letters are addressed to the studio while others have been sent to an address in Downtown LA (7th and Broadway). If they check the address, the characters will find that Miss Carita Schiller lives there.

A crumpled letter from private investigator Roger Moran to Starker. In this letter, the private investigator summarizes his mission to follow Starker, which he performed at the artist's own request. According to this report, Moran has kept Starker under surveillance to determine if he was being followed by someone else. Moran comes to the conclusion that this has been the case, but that he has not yet found out who is responsible. [**See Handout #2.**]

There is a letter from Samuel Stone (Mr. Pickett) in the pile. Mr Stone describes what he thinks Starker sees, and that he knows why his life is falling apart. He suggests that they should meet. [**See Handout #3.**]

The Paintings

The paintings in the closet also give the player characters some information. In total, there are three unfinished canvases and seven sketches in pencil. The paintings depict vaguely human figures with shockingly monstrous attributes marked "Thomas Braley", "Timothy Atkins" and "Patricia Hart". If the PCs check the names, they turn out to belong to three of the country's most prominent doctors. All live in completely different parts of the country.

With a few exceptions, the pencil sketches also represent monsters. They are not always marked, but the characters can read that the names Roslin and Howart have been scrawled there. Two of the sketches show the same woman as the paintings in the gallery. They were obviously made after Starker's moment of inspiration. Both sketches are labeled "Carita".

If they try to track down the names on the sketches, the characters can only find information about Roslin. Bertha Roslin is in fact Starker's neighbor. She is an old woman who hates the whole world and loves to quarrel. All the children of the neighborhood fear her and the adults despise her. If the characters visit her, she will rail against them and humanity in general, thus showing her true self.

Howart can be an important clue. If the characters have matched the legionnaire's sword to a list of all major weapon collectors, it will include Rhine Howart's name. Should they then decide to investigate Howart further, the scenario continues under its heading below. The clues go in different directions.

STARKER'S APARTMENT

One of the clues leads to Starker's apartment, his primary residence. The apartment is owned by Carita Schiller, Starker's mistress and favorite model. It is located in downtown LA, 7th and Broadway. It is at the top of an old Victorian house.

The house has eight floors and its interior corresponds to the exterior of the property. A wide staircase leads up through the floor plan around the shaft for an ancient elevator. If the characters choose to take the elevator, it makes very worrying screeching noises on the way up.

On the top floor, there is only one door. A brass sign on the door indicates Carita Schiller as the resident. A taped piece of paper indicates that Christian Starker also lives in the apartment.

If the player characters linger in the apartment for some time, the cairath will attack. See the next section.

1. The Front Door

The front door of the apartment is made of solid oak and difficult to force. The lock can be picked, but depending on time of day, the PC may be ***Acting Under Pressure*** to avoid attention from the neighbors. Perhaps they bribe or bluff their way in instead. The superintendent may be willing to let them in.

2. The Entrance Hall

The entrance hall reveals the lavish, exclusive taste that characterizes the entire apartment. On the floor is a beautiful Persian rug. In the shoe rack are several pairs of expensive Italian shoes and the coat hanger is heavily loaded with fashion items. One wall is completely occupied by a mirror.

3. The Kitchen

All the latest in modern kitchen equipment of the late 1940s is arranged tastefully across gleaming counters and in glass cabinets. The room is spotlessly clean with everything in its place. If they look in the fridge it is empty.

4. The Bathroom

A large clawfoot bathtub dominates the elaborately tiled floor. There is also a toilet and a bath. One wall is covered by a mural of a pastoral landscape in the Rococo style.

5. The Bedroom

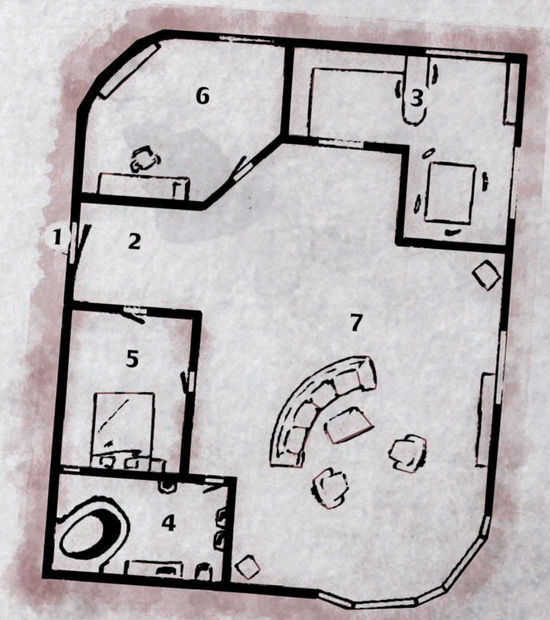
The room is almost entirely taken up by a massive four-poster bed. The room is messy and the bed unmade. If the PCs look in the closet, they find similar clothes to those found in the studio.

6. The Workroom

This room is used as some kind of office. On a large dark desk is a stack of letters, mainly commissions for Starker's art.

If the player characters search through the desk, they find a folder containing some black and white photos of a young man in his twenties in conversation with a gentleman around forty. The older man's head has been circled and marked with a question mark. If the characters have met Starker or seen pictures of him in a newspaper, they will recognize him as the younger man.

The folder also contains letters from a man who claims to be a dedicated art collector. He asks to meet Starker in the studio. Apparently Starker declined, because in the third letter, the appeals have turned into covert threats. Starker has scribbled down Roger Moran's phone number on the folder.



7. Living Room

The living room is sparsely furnished with a huge sofa, a radio, and a serving trolley filled with all kinds of spirits. The floor is covered with an expensive rug, there is a mechanical fan in the ceiling and on the walls hang paintings from Starker's early period along with an autographed photo of Greta Garbo. On a small table in front of the sofa are two candles and a lighter. One of the paintings is a bit crooked. Behind it is a wall safe. It is locked but it is clear that someone has tried to break into it. This is Carita's safe, and Starker tried to break into it in hope of getting his hands on something valuable. Cracking the safe requires the right tools and skills (for example, Fred's Burglary advantage) and takes some time (have the cairath attack in mind). Inside they will find a velvet box filled with a woman's expensive jewelry. If sold on the black market it's worth over 6000 USD (about 60,000 USD in modern currency).

Clues in the apartment

The only important clue is in the workroom. The folder is from Roger Moran's investigation, and the photos show Rhine Howart's lawyer, who is trying to conclude an agreement with Starker.

The characters now have enough clues to know what to do next. Otherwise, they will probably turn to Roger Moran to get more information. There are also other ways to find out Howart's name. Any collector or senior museum official can identify the man in the photo as Howart's attorney.

They may want to try to find Miss Schiller, but since she's an incarnate and doesn't want to be found, they won't find her. Most characters probably assume that she became one of the victims in the studio.

The Cairath

Now the characters have enough clues to guess what is actually going on, and the kidnapper knows this. Howart definitely wants to get rid of the characters and has decided to call upon the cairath again in order to kill them.

The assault begins when the characters are in Schiller's apartment. Howart's cairath smashes the basement floor and starts crawling up the stairs, leaving a trail of sewage water. At the same time, Howart casts another spell that plunges the building into darkness. The characters can still hear the rain and distant thunderclaps. The electricity goes out and the only light sources are candles, makeshift torches, or any flashlights or lanterns characters have brought. This also means that the elevator does not work.

The darkness lasts for several minutes. It takes Howart's cairath less than a minute to get up the stairs. If the characters remain quiet, they can hear the sounds of metal scratching on stone and the quiet moan of tormented souls. Soon, a sewer-like stench wafts towards them and a strange whisper, like a rustling wind with many voices, passes into their minds. The player may have to roll to resist the compulsion of the cairath.

• The Compulsion of the Cairath

When a character is at Critical stress (Anxious or lower), and is near the cairath, **roll +Willpower**:

(15+) The strange whispers in your head urge you to sacrifice, to cut flesh and to feed the thing -- your own flesh, or someone else's. You realize these are not your own thoughts and fight them off.

(10-14) The strange whispers in your head urges you to sacrifice, to cut flesh and to feed the thing -- your own flesh, or someone else's. You know it is wrong, and you try to resist the impulse, but it is so hard. The thing calling you feels like a friend, a parent, a god. (The player has -1 ongoing on all offensive rolls against the cairath. The character does not need to ***Keep it Together*** when she sees the cairath, since she does not see the horror in its being).

(-9) The strange whispers in your head urge you to sacrifice, and you realize the wisdom in this. The thing that approaches is a god that needs your devotion and love. (The player gets to choose, either cut off her own flesh, a **Serious Wound**, and feed it to the cairath or sacrifice someone else's flesh. The character is not able to hurt the cairath but may run from it. The character does not need to ***Keep it Together*** when she sees the cairath since she does not see the horror in its being.)

THE CAIRATH ATTACKS

When a character sees the cairath for the first time, they need to ***Keep it Together*** unless they are under its influence.

When the cairath reaches the apartment, or if the characters meet it on the stairs, it will attack and try to kill as many of them as possible. However, should any of them have brought a light source with them, the cairath will immediately try to extinguish it. Any character who has a light source, such as a flashlight, torch or lantern has +2 *ongoing* to ***Avoid Harm*** against the cairath's attacks.

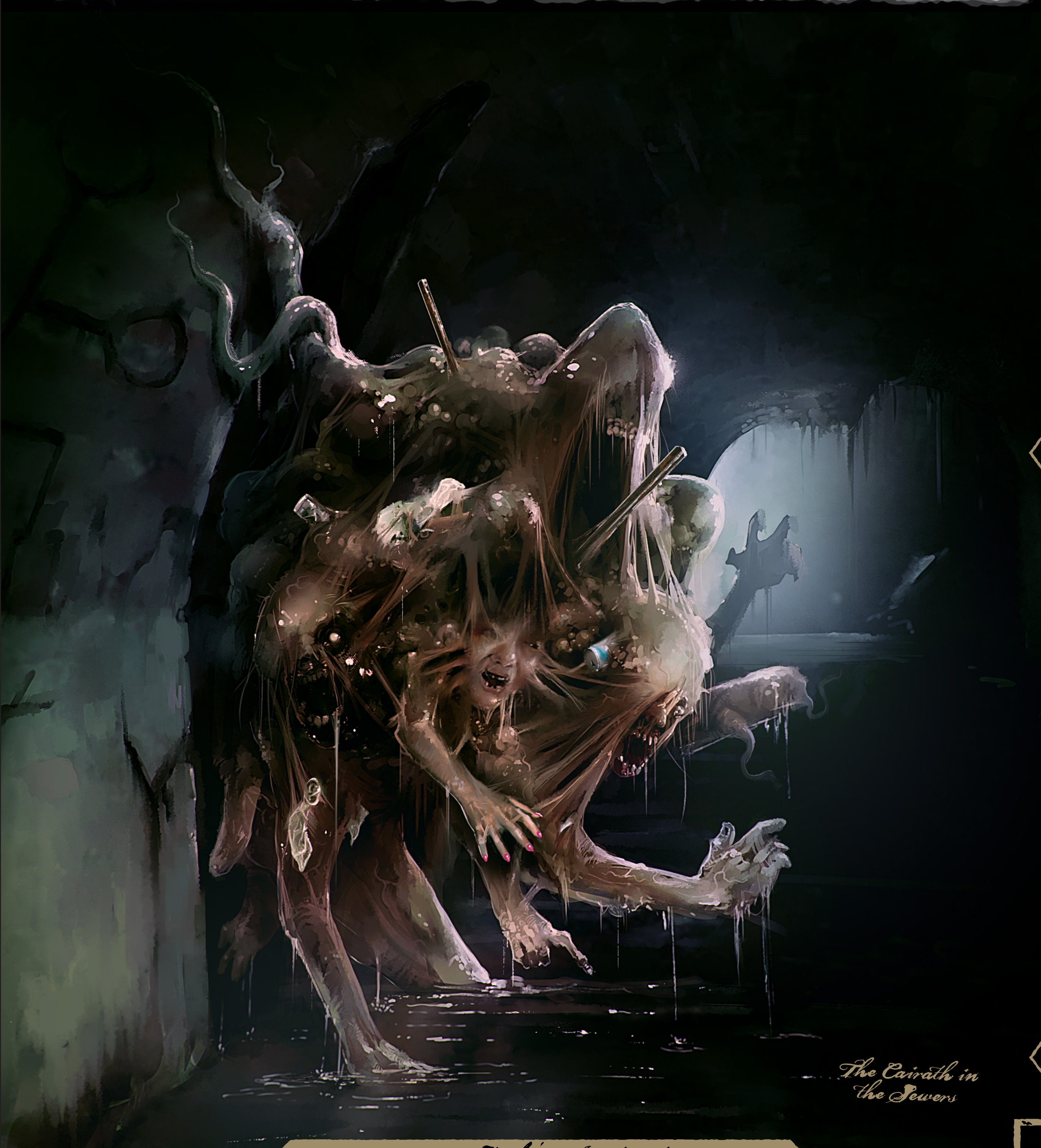
The creature continues to attack as long as it is dark in the house. When the spell stops working, it makes a horrible roar and tries to escape into the basement and get back into the sewers. If the characters visited the apartment during the day, this has serious consequences for Howart's cairath. When light hits the creature, large blisters appear on its body. Following that, the blisters rupture, then pus and blood flow out of them. Its skin also begins to smolder. If it is exposed to light for too long, the creature melts into a pool of blood and bodily fluids.

If the attack takes place at night, the creature panics and tries to escape down into the basement; should it be pushed into a corner when the enchantment is broken, it tries to get past the characters.

As soon as it reaches the stairs, the creature will rush towards the safe sewers. If the characters pursue it there, they might catch up with it in the sewers before it disappears into the Underworld. If the characters do not pursue his cairath down the drain, it will return to Howart.

ESCAPE

Should the characters open a window to try to escape, the wind and rain will throw them back. Circumstances make any attempt to get down the house foolhardy at best. Should any character still persist, they need to ***Act Under Pressure*** with -4 to the roll. Should they fall to the concrete below they will receive a **Critical Wound** automatically and need to ***Endure Injury*** with **3 Harm**.



The Cairath in the Sewers

ROGER MORAN

The PCs may wish to visit Roger Moran. If they try to call, no one answers. His combined office and home are centrally located, but in one of the city's seedier neighborhoods. He has an apartment on the third floor of a ten-story building. It says "Roger Moran - private investigator" on the door.

The door to his apartment is locked, and nobody opens no matter how many times the PCs knocks. What happens, however, is that an elderly lady sticks her head out of the neighboring apartment. If they explain why they are there, she will refer them to a shabby bar nearby and sadly tell them that Moran has started drinking again.

If the characters manage to get in, they find the apartment dirty and worn down, just like the rest of the neighborhood.

Moran's apartment

1. Hall

The hall is small and crammed with clothes. Here you will find everything from work overalls to police uniforms.

2. Office

From here, Moran runs his business. On the desk is a typewriter. The desk is cluttered with paper and there are a number of filing cabinets against the walls. There is nothing about Starker in the archive folders, or anything else related to his case. In one of the desk drawers, the characters find a small box with caliber .45 cartridges. In the same box there is also equipment for cleaning a pistol.

3. The Bathroom

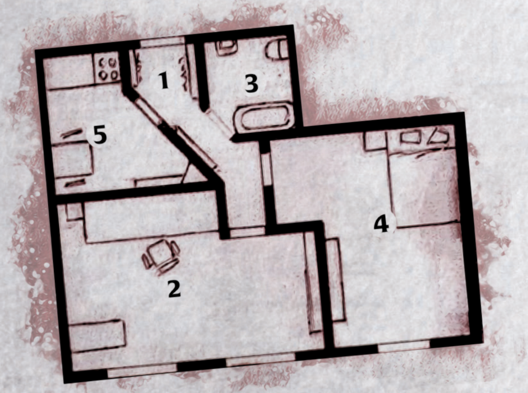
The bathroom is dirty; there are several razor blades in the sink, most of them bloody. There is too much blood for this to have simply been a shaving accident.

4. The Bedroom

This room, equipped with a narrow bed, is as messy as the rest of the apartment.

5. The Kitchen

The sink is full of unwashed plates and glasses. The breakfast from earlier in the day is left on the table. There are no sharp knives, whether in the kitchen or anywhere else in the apartment.



The Bar

Moran is not in his apartment. To meet him, the characters have to go to the bar pointed out by the neighbor.

Moran is easy to find, either by looking around or by asking the bartender. Moran is dressed in his trench coat and with a hat lying in front of him on the table. The characters also see that he is wearing a shoulder holster with a large automatic pistol inside the coat. He's staring at his empty whiskey glass.

When addressed, Moran will first play dumb and pretend that he doesn't know who this Roger Moran fellow is. But if the characters mention Starker or Howart, they will be asked to sit down. Moran then asks who sent them. If they pretend to be Howart's men, he will ask them to give Howart a message. The message is very simple: Moran promises never to interfere in Howart's business again. When he has told the characters this, he asks them to leave. If they stay, he's going to get violent.

If Moran can be calmed down, or if the characters state that they are Starker's friends, they can stay. Moran becomes extra sociable if the characters offer him alcohol. If asked how he feels about Starker, Moran says that the artist hired him to see if he was being followed. Moran carried out his mission and soon discovered that someone really was keeping Starker under surveillance. He then continued to dig a little into the matter for Starker and also took some pictures. Then Moran suddenly clams up and refuses to divulge more. If the characters are persistent, charm him or get him drunk, he will start to speak. It is obvious that he is terribly afraid of someone or something.

Moran reveals:

- Rhine Howart is stalking Starker.
- He lives in a guarded mansion in Beverly Hills.
- He is ex-military and served in WWII.
- He comes from a filthy rich family of famous art collectors.
- He has an obsession with Ancient Rome, and is a known collector of antiquities.
- He sent his men to follow the artist and keep him under watch.
- People that mess with Howart disappear.

If the characters manage to get him really drunk, Moran starts mumbling incoherently about the powers of darkness, eternal curses and so on...

RHINE HOWART

The characters have finally decided to call on this man, whose name has become so intimately associated with the bizarre events they have experienced. The nearest source is of course the phone book, where the characters can find both his name and address to his residence in Beverly Hills. If they contact Howart and try to arrange a meeting, he will be very rude and try to blow them off. He does not want to receive them in his home, but eventually agrees to meet elsewhere. If the characters fall for this trap, Howart will send out the cairath if the players haven't destroyed it. Otherwise he will send out five of his men armed with tommy guns.

If they investigate Howart's background, the characters discover that he was involved in military operations in the Pacific during WWII. He returned home five years ago and later became known as one of the world's leading experts on artifacts from the Roman Empire. He is also said to have become interested in paranormal phenomena and has made notable purchases of bizarre paintings for his art collection. It is very difficult to find out anything more about Howart. Most of it is classified and the characters mainly have to rely on rumors and hearsay. They can find a newspaper article from an auction where he that his interest in antiques has to do with his heritage that goes back to the emperors of the ancient roman empire.

Howart's home

Howart's home is located in a very nice area in Beverly Hills. The houses in the area are large and very luxurious. Howart's is no exception. It is surrounded by a high wall that from the street only leaves the upper floor and some treetops visible. If they reconnoiter the house during the day, the characters soon notice that there are always two people on guard at the gate. If they manage to peer in through the gate, they will catch a glimpse of the black Dodge that was parked outside Starker's studio.

1. The Wall

The wall that surrounds Howart's house is three meters high and crowned with broken glass. There's only one opening in the wall and it's protected by a gate and two of Howart's enforcers. They are each armed with combat shotguns and handguns as backup weapons.

2. The Garage

There are three cars in the garage. One is Howart's private vehicle, a Rolls-Royce Silver Dawn, and the other two are already familiar to the characters: the black Dodge and the gray Chrysler.

3. The Veranda

Another of Howart's guards is sitting on the porch. He is armed with a Tommy Gun.

4. The Garden

The garden is patrolled by two of Howart guards, armed with Tommy Guns.

DOWNSTAIRS

1. Hall

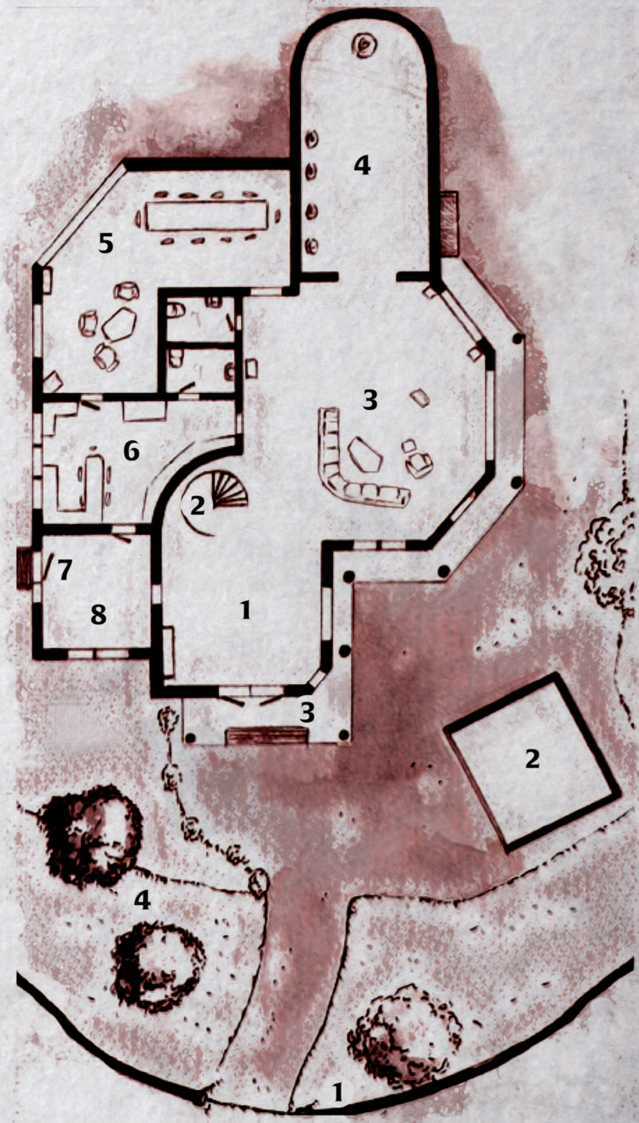
The hall is large and ostentatious. On one wall hangs a huge gilt-framed mirror. There are several dark overcoats, which are very reminiscent of the legionnaires' outwear.

2. The Staircase

There is a spiral staircase to the upper floor. It is made of metal and covered with a long soft carpet.

3. The Living Room

The living room is richly decorated, no expenses spared. On the walls hang paintings by the great masters, side by side with photographs from the war in the Pacific. There are also photos with Howart and movie stars of the era such as Ava Gardner and Humphery Bogart. In front of the sofas is a brand new Zenith TV set.



4. The Gallery

The gallery contains the masterpieces from Howart's collections: sculptures and weapons from the ancient Roman Empire, paintings by Picasso, Munch, van Gogh, Vaqueline, Miro and Klimt and more. One wall is dominated by Howart's portrait, signed by Christian Starker, which reveals the collector's sick soul in its entire horrific splendor. The paint of this portrait is still wet.

5. Dining room

A magnificent dining room occupied by an oak dining table.

6. The Kitchen

The kitchen is shiny and modern. The master of the house seems to be obsessed with long shiny knives, which hang in abundance from the ceiling.

7. The Back Door

This is the guards' normal entrance and exit. Parts of their equipment hang inside the hall, such as shoulder holsters and batons. The door is locked with a fairly simple lock.

8. Guardhouse

Used by the guards when they are not on duty. It is currently being used by an unarmed man. He sleeps in one of the beds.

9. The Toilet

The room contains a small toilet and a sink.

UPSTAIRS

1. Study

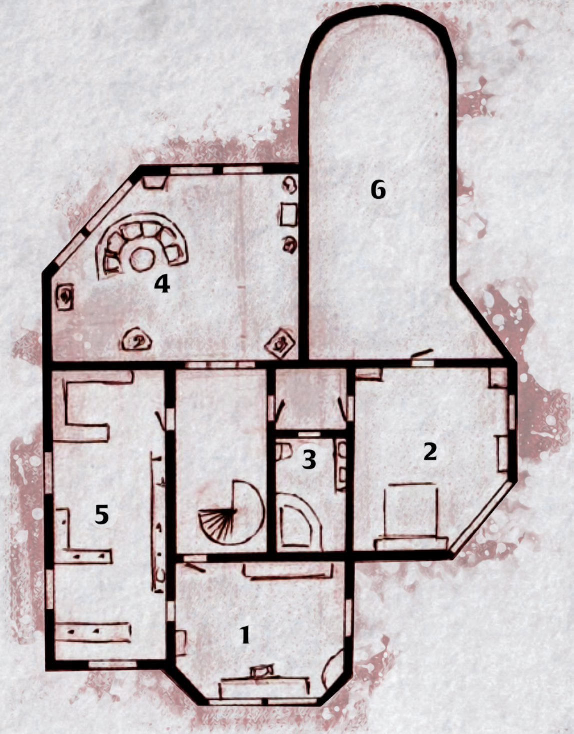
In Rhine Howart's study, there is a folder with several newspaper clippings about Starker. The folder also contains exhibition catalogs that describe Starker's art. The PCs also find a collection of black and white photographs of Starker at an art exhibition together with a beautiful woman (Carita Schiller). There are also other photos of Starker's studio, Schiller's apartment and pictures of Starker that seem to have been snapped in secret. The desk has a built in safe. If the safe is cracked, the PCs find 1,000 USD (about 10,000 USD in modern currency) and several small vials of a special mixture of delysid. This is an early form of LSD. Howart uses this in mind control experiments, and in attempts to grant himself visions. If a player character takes a dose, they will start to hallucinate within a couple of minutes. It lasts for about 6 hours. During this time the affected PC's **Willpower** takes a -2 penalty, while **Soul** carries a +2 forward on all rolls.

2. The Bedroom

Howart's bedroom is occupied by a huge bed. The ceiling is covered with mirrors. In the closet hang suits of the latest fashion. The characters can discover a S&W .38 Special revolver (handgun) in one of the nightstand drawers.

3. The Bathroom

Inside, the entire wall surface is covered with mirrors. The room is dominated by a huge green bathtub that makes the toilet and sink seem pitifully small. In the small bathroom cabinet, there are various illicit substances, such as cocaine and heroin.



4. The Living Room

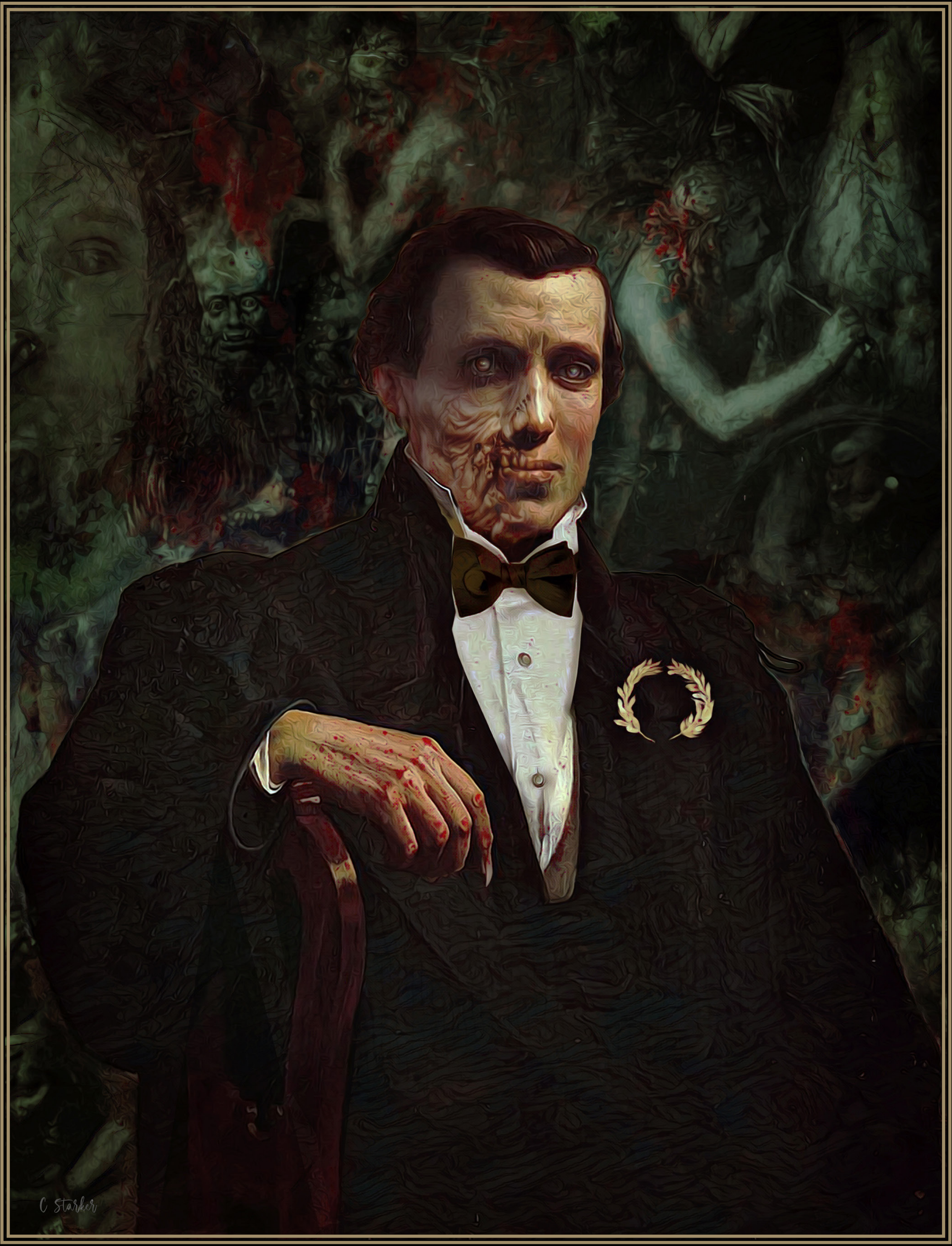
This room, like the rest of the house, is gaudy and luxurious. There are lots of antiques and the walls are covered with paintings. A wall surface has been devoted exclusively to antique torture tools. In a glassed display table, there is a collection of antique coins from the Ancient Roman Empire.

5. Antique Chamber

A large collection of antiques from Ancient Rome are on display. Rings, coins, statues, marble busts, pieces of mosaics, vases, amphoras, an eagle symbol from a Roman standard and much more. It is an invaluable collection for the right buyer.

6. Library

This room is the heart of Howart's home. Here is all his knowledge of the world. He has a whole section devoted to Ancient Rome. There's a section with books on western occultism, including the standard works such as Crowley's "Magick in Theory and Practice", but Howart also possesses many obscure and precious tomes. One of the walls is almost completely occupied by a huge iron gate. It has a massive lock but it is unlocked and slightly ajar. The door can be pushed open with a metallic screech, and the wall behind it vanishes. The winds from the Underworld hit the characters and they look down into a tunnel that leads into darkness. There seems to be nothing left for them but to continue forward.



Painting of Howart in the Gallery

Beyond the Gate

As they walk through the gate, the characters themselves unknowingly step into the borderlands of the Underworld. An infinity of underground passages opens before them and the air is filled with strange and echoing sounds. They walk in darkness but can see a faint light coming from ahead.

THE LEGIONNAIRE

At the end of a long tunnel is an opening, massive and grand like the gate of a cathedral, cut out of the black rock. From the opening comes a golden light, like that of many candles or a bonfire. As the characters approach the light, a silhouette appears. He is dressed as a Roman legionary and carries a gladius - the typical short sword of the Roman army. He greets the characters and asks in Latin why they want to meet his master (this is something that George should partly understand). If they do not respond or show him respect, the legionnaire will immediately attack. Under no circumstances will he let them pass until the ritual is completed. Once they have defeated the legionnaire, the road forward is open.

The Temple

Once the characters have stepped through the opening, they stand in something that looks like a large underground cathedral (150 meters from one side to the other). The walls are made of black basalt and the ceiling disappears into shadow. There are grand columns that stretch up into a seeming infinity above. The floor is covered with thick, black, volcanic sand and gravel. The players may remember seeing this sand on the floor of the studio. This temple of the Underworld borders the halls of Inferno, and the influence of the Death Angel Togarini is ever present. The light in the temple comes from thousands of lit black candles. They are found everywhere except for the cells along the aisles and the cairath's chamber. Moans of pain and suffering echo from above mixed with Howart's chanting voice from further in.

1. The Entrance

A set of wide stairs lead down to the black sand floor. The sand is basalt and varies in size from thin grains to sharp gravel. A PC who falls into this sand could easily cut themselves.

2. The Black Columns

There are 6 pairs of massive black columns that disappear into the darkness above. The floor in the middle of the columns is covered with hundreds, maybe thousands, of the black candles. Their smoke is heavy, like a winter fog, just above the sand. From high above, moans of suffering from thousands of voices waft softly down to the characters. Walking here, beneath a sea of suffering voices and in a chamber that defies any logic, claws and tears at the PCs' psyche [**-1 Stability**].

3. Cells of the Legionnaires

In these dark cells, the legionnaires dwell when they are not on a mission from Howart. The walls of the cells are filled with paintings depicting Ancient Rome. Howart hopes that these paintings will trigger their memories so they can tell him about this era. There is also a set of Ancient Roman armor in one of the cells -- it belongs to the legionnaire that attacked the player characters on the pier.

4. Cairath Box

This room is cold and the walls are slick with water and the sand is wet. On a pedestal stands an iron box. It is not locked. It is filled with rock salt and on top of it is a piece of flesh. This flesh is the flesh of the cairath that Howart bound to its service. As long as this flesh is in the box, the cairath is bound to Howart. If the cairath is alive, the flesh is slowly pulsating like some strange organ. If the cairath is dead, it will be blackened and dried up. George, with his occult studies, can understand that this box is an artifact that binds a creature.

5. The Sacrificial Mural

On the black stone that separates the temple in two sections there is a mural painting that floats, twists, and moves like a nightmare in slow motion. There are shapes of bodies, dark torrents, streams of blood, ruins, strange temples, and more. It is hypnotic and dreamlike and, when approached, the tormented moans from up above become more and more ecstatic. They now start to sound like moans of pleasure mixed with pain. This is one of Howart's magical defenses.

The hypnotic patterns in the mural fill the mind with the compulsive urge to perform a blood sacrifice.

◆ The Compulsion of the Mural

If a character looks at the mural, **roll +Soul**:

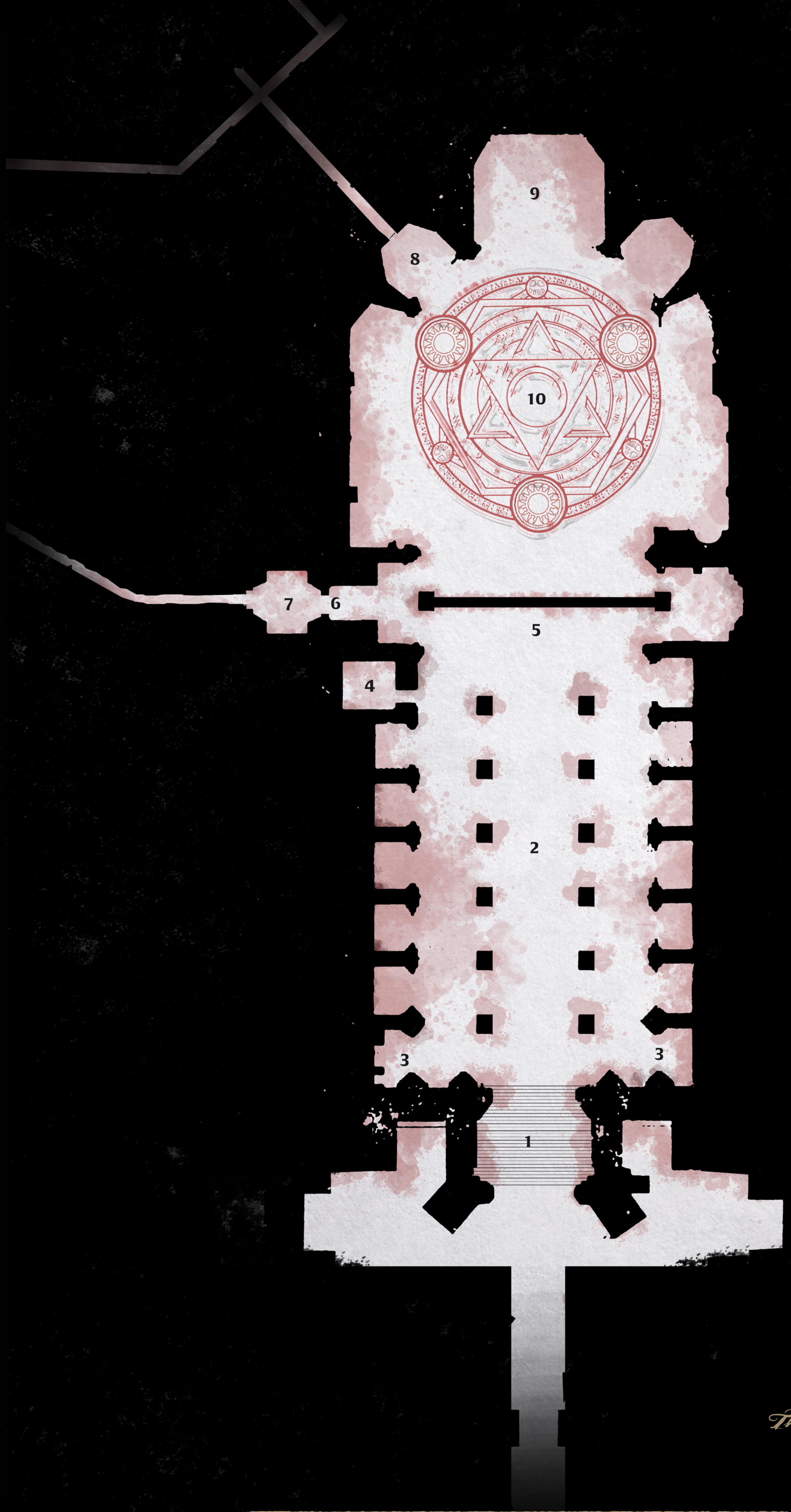
(15+) You see strange hypnotic patterns and suddenly feel the urge to slit your wrists and offer your blood to this damned place. But you know these are not your own thoughts, and you resist.

(10-14) As above but you still hear the call, reduce **Stability (−1)**.

(-9) You need to offer your blood to the mural painting.

A player character that falls under the spell will grab the nearest sharp object (a stiletto, a sharp stone, they might even try to bite themselves open) and cut open their wrists. If the player character is stopped by others they will snap out of it and the result will be counted as (10-14). If not, the player character feels a rush of pure pleasure as the blood spills out of their veins. Instead of falling to the black sand, the blood drips upwards into the blackness. The blood forms strings and lifts the sacrificing character slowly, like a marionette, towards the ceiling. Slowly, levitating upwards, spiraling like a ballerina, the character rocks in pure ecstasy. They disappear into the darkness above -- then, suddenly the other characters hear a ripping sound. Clothes and equipment fall onto the black sand below. The character is gone.

Dead... or worse.


9
8
10
7
6
5
4
2
3
3
1

The Temple

6. The Drapery

A thick drapery covers the wall. Behind it is an entrance to the chamber of the cairath. The drapery gives off a nauseating stench of rot and sewage.

7. Chamber of the Cairath

Here, on the wet, stinking sands dwells the cairath. The being will most likely be here unless it was killed. From an opening in the other wall comes a cool draft. This opening leads both further down into the Underworld and the city's sewers.

8. Gate to the Underworld

This iron Gate leads into the twisted labyrinths of the Underworld. It is locked, but Howart has the key. He will try to escape this way if he feels outmatched.

9. Preparation Chamber

Filled with the items needed to prepare the magical rituals. Here Howart changes clothes to his ceremonial robes.

10. The Altar

Rhine Howart stands at the altar. He is wearing a black toga, his face is painted with soot and blood, and on his head he has an ancient laurel wreath in gold. He looks like some ancient emperor or deranged priest. In his hands is an ancient-looking blade. In front of him, on the altar, lies Christian Starker. Starker is bound, naked, and pale. Rhine Howart has already cut him several times during the ritual so the artist's body is covered in shallow wounds that slowly drain him of blood.

Around Howart and Starker are intricate magic symbols drawn in blood. Black candles burn in concentric circles around the altar. The candle flames burn a strange blue and reek of burnt flesh.

The Ritual

Just as the characters enter the Temple, Howart is ending the ritual that summons a nepharite from the clergy of Togarini. Howart wants to give Starker as a gift to his masters for more knowledge, more power, more of anything he can get his hands on. The closer the characters get to the altar, the louder the chanting becomes. A shadow begins to take shape inside the magic circle, and the air is filled with sweet incense as the nepharite begins to manifest.

When Howart sees the player characters he will try to hold them off long enough to summon the nepharite. If the cairath is alive, he will call upon it to attack.

Killing Howart or disturbing the ritual: If the characters disturb the magical ritual (for example: destroying the circles) the nepharite will fade away before their eyes. Howart will try to flee, but might return again. Starker will have enough energy to be able to leave the Underworld and Howart's house with some help.

When the Nepharite Appears

The distant moans and scream from the black infinity above intensifying to an almost deafening crescendo. Something drips down from above. Blood. The dripping intensifies to a drizzle. Then a rainfall. The thousand upon thousand candles around you start to hiss as they are put out one by one. The temple is swallowed by darkness. Your head spins, the world itself seems to change, twist. It's being pulled out from under you. You feel sick. Dizzy. You stumble. Sharp gravel slides under your feet. The air is filled with bitter smoke from the dying candles. A haunting hymn praising some unknown power echoes around you. And the screams, the screams from above. You hear people being torn apart. Your clothes are now soaked by their blood. Plastered to your skin. Dripping down into your eyes.

When the nepharite Amaranthine steps through the walls of our reality it brings the soul of Inferno with her. She is not bound by the pentagram but cannot leave the temple. She cannot stretch herself that far from the world to which she is bound.

Below are some suggestions on how to handle this scene.

Keep it Together: The player characters need to see how they handle this situation.

Separate them: Reality warps, the temple seems to change around them as the nepharite manifests. If the player characters are not holding each other's hands they may end up in different parts of the temple. You may put one character next to the altar, the other in an alcove, a third stumbling in the nave.

Blood and Shadows: The nepharite is an inhumanly tall and imposing creature. But the world around the characters is dark, wet with blood from the drizzling rain, and only in a few alcoves candles still burn. Describe the nepharite as a haunting shape. Her contralto voice rings out in strange hymns. Remember, if the characters don't attack or try to rescue Starker, she ignores them.

Ranged combat: The darkness, the smoke from a thousands dying candles, makes ranged combat almost impossible. Here are some suggested modifiers: Range arm: No modifier, Range room -2, Range field -10 (virtually impossible). Amaranthine is not affected by the darkness in any way.

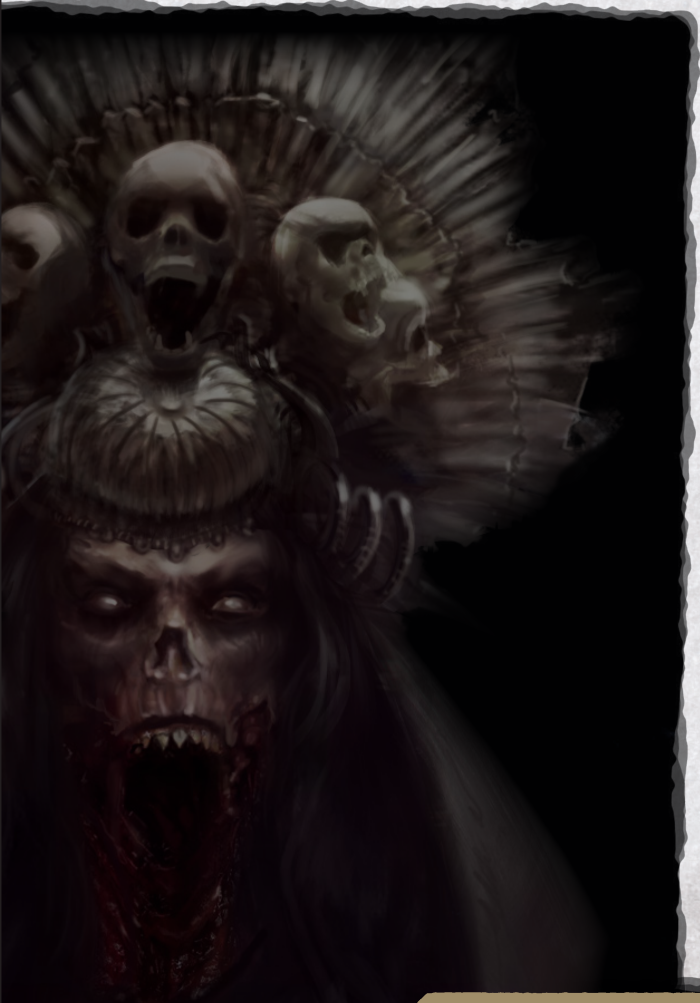
Music: This should be a significant event. Depending how you set the scene you might want to change the music to something dark, haunting and nightmarish. For example *Anthropic Uncreation* by *Vestigal*, *Hellbound* by *Christopher Young*, *Blue Moon* by *Atrium Carceri*, *Lonely Void* by *Mica Levi*, or *Torture Room* by *Mechanoreceptor* from the Official KULT: Divinity Lost Soundtrack.

The nepharite is summoned: If the PCs hesitate for too long, get caught up in combat with the cairath, or the gamemaster feels they need some more opposition, Howart manages to end his ceremony. The nepharite takes physical form and the moans and screams reach a crescendo. From the dark of the ceiling, the PCs hear the sound of ripping flesh and it starts to rain blood. The black candles extinguish themselves one by one, and the temple drowns in darkness. Twenty-two candles are left burning in total, hidden in alcoves or nooks. If the characters have not brought any lights, they can barely see.

If the PCs attack the nepharite, the creature switches her focus from Starker and attacks the characters. The nepharite uses her Hymns of Madness to subdue the characters. She is not interested in killing them. Characters who are knocked out, groveling, fleeing, or panicking are not of interest. Starker is the soul she wants. Should the nepharite kill any characters, or turn them into howling purgatides, they must accompany her to Inferno. If the nepharite is defeated, she dissolves into ash and is drawn back into Inferno.

Depending on how the situation plays out, Howart will either try to help his master's priestess, or he will flee into the Underworld and back towards Elysium.

For suggestions how to handle this scene see: *When the nepharite appears.*



THE END?

The story may well be continued. Endless possibilities have opened up for you and the players. KULT can take you far beyond what can be described on a few pages. The scenario can easily be expanded into a larger plot, and there are many loose threads that need to be tied up.

If you wish to continue playing after this, give the players **5 Experience** Points for the scenario so they may make one Advancement. Also, give them some time to recover some wounds and **Stability**. Make them choose one new Disadvantage each. They should also assign new Dramatic Hooks (see page 136 in the Core Rules).

Mr. Pickett

The player characters have proven themselves to Mr. Pickett. He will let them live, but he has no intention of letting them go. He needs pawns in his future plans, so he will reward them with allowing them to go home to their loved ones. Make it very clear that they are being watched and that they are not allowed to leave Las Vegas. If some of the player characters died, players can introduce new goons in the service of Mr. Pickett.

Christian Starker

What will happen with the artist? What can his art reveal? How will he react to the player characters? What will his role be in Las Vegas?

Carita Schiller

Will she appear in the story? Did Mr. Pickett's plan work? Does she come to Las Vegas to find her lover?

Rhine Howart

If he fled into the Underworld, he can surely return. Even if he died at the hands of the characters he might be brought back by his masters, or he could have had contingency plans in place. Will he exact revenge on the characters? What does he do now?

Amaranthine

Amaranthine has seen the player characters, if only for a moment. Is she interested in them? What does she want?

Roger Moran

What scared him so badly? He may seek out the characters to ask for help. Or maybe someone saw when they met him, someone who now wants to meet them?

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

The Damned Legionnaires

Servants Howart summoned from Inferno. These twisted souls are shadows of legionnaires of Ancient Rome. They have vague memories of the ancient world and speak in casual Latin, but they are soulless and cold and bound to Howart's servitude. They are absent-minded, almost apathetic, and can only express themselves through simple sentences and the odd idiom. Even in the most violent situations, they never show any emotion whatsoever.

The Assassin at the Pier: He is wearing a long coat, a filthy suit, torn shoes, a gray fedora and a stained scarf. His throat has a large infected wound that never heals and he has dark blue blisters around his armpits and genitals. He stinks of damp and must, like rancid meat and swamp water. His fingernails have developed into claws that tightly grip the short sword he keeps hidden under his coat.

The Guard outside Howart's Temple: He is tall and handsome. He has pale skin and a gruesome scar across the face. His fingernails are now claws. He is dressed in the Roman army's traditional armor and carries a gladius, the short sword which he wields with great skill. Beneath the armor cuirass, his skin is wet and rotten with the same, dark blue, blisters as his brother.

Abilities

- *Undead:* All **Harm** caused by firearms and crushing weapons is reduced by -1.
- *Inhuman:* Cannot be influenced or otherwise reasoned with.
- *Natural weapons:* The legionnaires' fingernails have been transformed into claws capable of tearing flesh.

Combat [3], **Influence** [-], **Magic** [-]

Combat [Considerable]

- Disarm opponent.
- Attack several targets.
- Close in quickly [move one distance in an instant].

Attacks

Machinelike and effective. Rushes opponents with almost supernatural speed. Attacks without fear, strikes weapons from opponents hands, and follows up with an attack. The legionnaires do not react to pain and damage.

Natural weapons: Claws [2] [Distance: arm].

Short Sword: Brutal slashing [3] [Distance: arm]; Attack two targets [2] [Distance: Arm, may hit up to 2 targets.].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○○☠

- Uses someone as a human shield.
- Lose grip of something.
- Appears defeated.
- **Death**: Just stops, falls without a sound.

Cairath Worshiper

One of the guests at Christian Starkers studio. When the massacre ensued, he hid in the bathroom together with his young wife. Then the cairath appeared and he shattered completely. He murdered his wife and skinned her, but she managed to ram a pen into his eye. The man is quite big and strong and has totally blocked out the pain in his eye. It is not possible to make oneself understood with him in his current state. If the PCs manage to subdue him or knock him out, the cairath's influence will diminish. As the reality of his action sinks in, he will weep and scream. He's inconsolable, but not a threat to anyone anymore. How will the PCs handle him?

Combat [2], **Influence** [-], **Magic** [-]

Combat [Novice]

- Mad stabs.
- Knock to the ground.

Attacks

The man is in a psychosis and enslaved by the mind of the cairath. He will attack with great fury to try to skin them as offerings.

Knife: Mad Stabs [2] [Distance: arm]

Unarmed: Punch and bite [1] [Distance: arm]; Knock down [1]. [Distance: arm, victim is knocked prone].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○☠

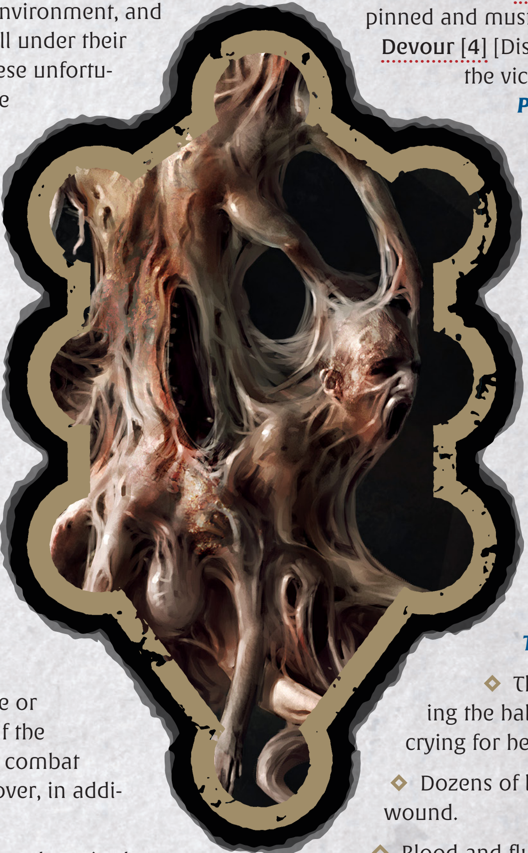
- Laugh madly.
- Moment of clarity, remembering who he is...
- Unconscious.
- **Death**.

Cairath

Cairath are creatures living in the sewers and catacombs just beneath the city's surface. They are grotesque, bloated, and rotting abominations, stinking carcasses melded with metal junk and trash. This one dwells in Howart's temple and its rotting flesh is filled with gravels and grains of black volcanic sand.

Cairaths don't devour their victims, but affix their squirming bodies to their own. These unfortunates can live for days, even weeks, undergoing this painful bonding process. Their wailing and pleas for help telegraph the creature's presence from a long distance. They consume people, animals, and even other supernatural creatures in this fashion. Cairath consciously influence their environment, and troubled or frightened people can fall under their spell, worshipping them as gods. These unfortunates form small cults, which capture stray animals, homeless people, and other outcasts and shackle them in areas they know cairath hunt.

This cairath has been bound to Howart's service via magic, and the Compulsion of Togarini flows through it. In Howart's temple there is an iron box and in it there is a piece of the cairath's flesh on a layer of rock salt. As long as this flesh is in the box, the cairath is bound to Howart. If the cairath dies, this piece of flesh dries up and blackens.



Abilities

- *Animalistic intellect:* Cannot be influenced or charmed.
- *Gigantic:* Cannot be held in place or knocked over in close combat. If the being's attack connects in close combat they always knock their victim over, in addition to any other results.
- *Devouring:* Anyone fighting against the cairath in close combat suffers *−1 ongoing*.
- *Mountain of meat:* All **Harm** is reduced by −1 except damage from explosions, fire, or acid.
- *Monstrous form:* Humans who see the creature must ***Keep it Together*** to not become paralyzed by fear.
- *Light Sensitive:* This cairath is sensitive to light. It takes **2 Harm** in the direct sunlight and is distracted by light sources. Any character that has a light source such as a flashlight, torch or lantern takes *+2 ongoing* to ***Avoid Harm***.

Combat [4], **Influence** [-], **Magic** [1].

Combat [Exceptional]

- Crush opponent.
- Attack many targets simultaneously.
- Howling shrieks.
- Devour someone [heals **2 Wounds**].

Magic [Novice]

- Influence someone's mind [***Keep it Together*** or fall under the cairath's control (see unique move on page 14 of this scenario).

Attacks

The cairath moves slowly, but its nightmarish appearance paralyzes humans with overwhelming fear. While bullets seem to do little damage, close combatants tend to get crushed or swallowed by the monster.

Natural weapons: Grapple [1] [Distance: arm, victim is pinned and must ***Act Under Pressure*** to get free]; Devour [4] [Distance: arm, only pinned victims, the victim has to cut itself out, ***Act Under Pressure***]; Crush [3] [Distance: arm]; Howling Shrieks [–] [Distance: room/area, anyone that hear the shrieks must ***Keep it Together*** or -2 **Stability**.

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○○○○○○○○○☠

- Wounds open up in the swollen flesh.
- The cairath tries to grapple the attacker [***Avoid Harm***].
- One of its extremities is cut off and crawls around on the ground.
- A human head cries and screams in agony [***Keep it Together***].
- The attack opens up the flesh, exposing the half-integrated body of a human, crying for help [***Keep it Together***].
- Dozens of larvae erupt through an open wound.
- Blood and fluids pour out of the creature [*+1 ongoing* to all rolls against it].
- The cairath flees down into the sewers.
- **Death**: The creature dies in a chorus screams and howls.

Howart's enforcers

Various ruffians that Howart has gathered among the city's outcasts. He has given them work and a meaning to their lives. They have all converted to the cult of Togarini. They are indebted to Howart, and having seen his powers, they live in constant fear of their master. The enforcers can be used as soon as "Howart's men" are mentioned. They have different weapons depending on where they are used, as noted in the text.

Combat [2], **Influence** [1], **Magic** [-]

Combat [Novice]

- Riddle the environment with bullets.
- Search for intruders.

Influence [Weak]

- Call for backup.

Attacks

The guards use lethal violence when they feel threatened, but act stressed and don't think clearly while under attack. More composed opponents can outsmart them.

Stiletto: Stab [2] [Distance: arm].

S&W M1917 (handgun): Aimed shots [2] [Distance: room].

Tommy Gun: Full auto [3] [Distance: room, field, attacks up to 3 targets in close vicinity to each other].

Combat shotgun: Aim & fire [3/1] [Distance: room/field].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○☠

- Retreat to safe position.
- Gushing blood.
- Dying (but can be saved).
- **Death**.

Roger Moran

The archetypal private investigator. He is wearing a hat and trench coat. He rarely shaves, but that's just good for maintaining his image. He has always been proud of his alcohol tolerance ("I can quit any time I want to") but it was not until he was commissioned by Starker that he began to drink heavily.

He diligently carried out his mission until he suddenly discovered something he should not have. It put him in a state of shock and he started drinking to keep his nightmares at bay. He hated himself for it and has tried to commit suicide several times in last few weeks. The depression makes him short-tempered and he uses every opportunity to both drink and fight. He constantly carries a Colt 1911 in a shoulder holster. If there is a physical conflict with Roger Moran, use the stats for Police Officer (Page 239)

Rhine Howart

Rhine Howart sees himself as destined for great things. He studied antiquity in his younger years and became obsessed with the stories of Alexander the Great, the Roman emperors, and the power they wielded. He was from a rich family of art collectors and patrons, but Howart chose to become an officer in the army. A true leader needs to know the art of war, after all. As a military man, he oversaw torture camps in the Pacific, experimenting with several new forms of torture as well. Howart even studied the methods of Unit 731 after Japan surrendered and their scientists were given immunity under Operation Paperclip. Through this fascination with death, he came to discover the presence of Togarini beyond the veil. His more and more extreme transgressions granted him power and insight but also delusions that he was the son of Ancient Rome. He made a pact with the nepharite Amaranthine of the clergy of Togarini, and she granted him magical powers. When he returned to the states, he laid the foundation for a new cult that has the goal to crown him as emperor. Howart's taste for the morbid got him interested in some of the great masters' paintings. He discovered that some particularly infamous or obscure painting showed the true world beyond the Illusion. He began to collect more and more of these works of art and soon became known as "Julius Collector" among his colleagues. He developed an interest in Starker, and now knows that he will be a perfect offering to the nepharite clergy. However, he has also begun to understand the enormity of the powers that govern our world. He knows there are beings in positions that pretend to be human, but are not. His hubris makes him quite sure that he can deal with them as well.

Abilities

- *Bound to Higher Power:* Rhine Howart serves the will of the Death Angel Togarini.

Combat [3], **Influence** [3], **Magic** [3].

Combat [Considerable]

- Hidden weapon (***Act Under Pressure*** to react).
- Military Training.
- Take cover in a tactical position.

Influence [Considerable]

- Military contacts.
- Leads a Togarini Cult.
- Well known art collector.

Magic [Considerable]

- Adept in Death Magic (III).
- Spread the principle of Compulsion.
- Hidden temple.

Attacks

Howart knows that he has a great destiny. If he's in danger of dying, he flees or surrenders rather than face final demise. If he thinks he can defeat his enemies, he will.

Roman Gladius: Stab deep into body [2] [Distance: arm]; Twist it and rip it out [3] [Distance: arm].

Hidden Colt M1908 (Handgun): Aimed shots [2] [Distance: room].

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○☠

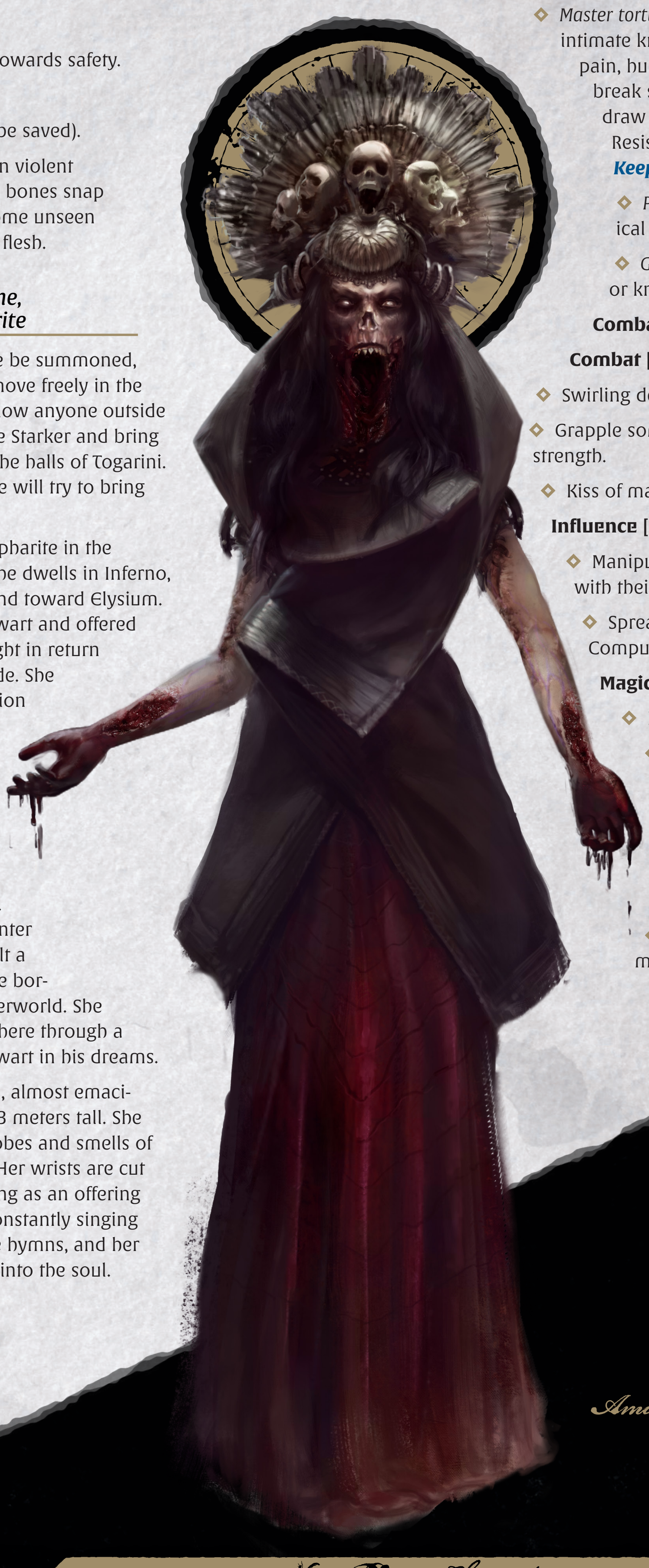
- Wounded.
- Flees bleeding towards safety.
- Knocked out.
- Dying (but can be saved).
- **Death**: Shakes in violent spasms. Several bones snap and break as some unseen force leaves his flesh.

Amaranthine, The Nepharite

Should the nepharite be summoned, she will be able to move freely in the temple, but can't follow anyone outside it. She will try to take Starker and bring him to Inferno and the halls of Togarini. If she is attacked, she will try to bring down the attackers.

Amaranthine is a nepharite in the Clergy of Togarini. She dwells in Inferno, but stretches her mind toward Elysium. There she found Howart and offered him power and insight in return for Howart's servitude. She fuels Howart's delusion about becoming the emperor of a new Roman Empire and feasts on his perverted dreams, the excess and orgies that play out in his mind. Amaranthine can't enter Elysium, but she built a temple for him in the borderlands of the Underworld. She can be summoned there through a ritual she taught Howart in his dreams.

The nepharite is thin, almost emaciated, but is close to 3 meters tall. She wears ceremonial robes and smells of incense and blood. Her wrists are cut and eternally bleeding as an offering to Togarini. She is constantly singing or humming strange hymns, and her gaze seems to stare into the soul.



Amaranthine

Abilities

- *Bound to Inferno:* If she is annihilated in Elysium, she will be resurrected in Inferno.
- *Master torturer:* The creature possesses intimate knowledge of how to utilize pain, humiliation, and suffering to break someone else's will and draw out all their shame and truth. Resisting this torture requires ***Keep it Together*** at −2.
- *Pact-weaver:* She can seal magical pacts with humans.
- *Gigantic:* Cannot be grappled or knocked over in close combat.

Combat [3], **Influence** [2], **Magic** [5].

Combat [Considerable]

- Swirling dervish dance.
- Grapple someone with supernatural strength.
- Kiss of madness.

Influence [Novice]

- Manipulate someone in accordance with their hidden compulsions.
- Spread the Principle of Compulsion.

Magic [Exceptional]

- Hymns of Madness.
- Create howling purgatides (victim needs to be *Broken*).
- Gaze into somebody's soul and past lives.
- Distort and warp rooms, streets, paths, and stairs.
- Create a pact with a mortal subject.

Attacks

Amaranthine uses her magic when attacking, trying to break the opponents' wills and bodies, and then use them as her servants. Her primary attack is the Hymns of Madness. If the enemies get close, the nepharite enters a swirling dervish dance, and carves them up with ritual blades. She may inflict the Kiss of Madness by grabbing a victim and kissing them with a long, slithering, tongue. She pushes her tongue into the victim's throat and wraps it around their soul, pulling their perceptions of the world asunder.

Ritual blade: Cut up [3] [Distance: arm], Swirling dervish dance [2] [Distance: Room, up to two targets].

Raw strength: Grab and lift up [–] [Distance: arm, ***Act Under Pressure*** to get away]; Kiss of Madness [-5 **Stability**] [Distance: arm, target must be grabbed].

Magic: Hymns of Madness [*] [Distance: field, up to three victims]; Warp surroundings [–] [***See Through the Illusion*** to orientate yourself]; Gaze into soul [–] [***Keep it Together*** so as to not reveal Disadvantage or Dark Secret]; Create howling purgatide [Victims need to be *Broken* (0 **Stability**)].

• Hymns of Madness

The Nepharite chants and sings dark hymns that overtake the minds of up to three victims within hearing range. This warps both their bodies and minds.

When a victim that the nepharite has targeted hears the hymns, ***roll +Willpower****:*

(15+) Resists the mad hymns.

(10-14) The mad and twisted hymns claw at both mind and flesh [**1 Harm** and -1 **Stability**].

(-9) The mad and twisted hymns rips up both mind and flesh [**2 Harm** and -2 **Stability**].

If a victims **Stability** is reduced to 0 from the attack it is transformed into a howling purgatide in the nepharite's service.

Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○○○○○☠

- Ignore the injuries.
- Distorted and dissonant hymns stream from its throat.
- A deep wound opens up.
- Whirls away in a mad Dervish Dance to Distance: Room.
- Shrieks in pain and madness, it overwhelms the senses. [Everyone has –1 on next roll].
- Loss of control [All purgatides fall down, dead or insane].
- **Death**: Amaranthine screams and starts to whirl around faster and faster until her body dissolves to swirling ash. She is gone from Elysium.

Howling purgatide

A howling purgatide is a servant of Inferno that exists in the borderlands between life and death. They were once a human who drowned in their own madness. The powers of the Death Angel Togarini sank its claws into them and perverted them. The howling purgatide looks like their human form but their features are twisted; the eyes stare in fear and delight, the face is an animal grin. From their mouth comes guttural howls and shrill shrieks when they're excited to kill and torture. Howling purgatides have a jerky, quick gait as though buffeted by an invisible wind. Since they are close to death, they are hard to kill. Their bodies often have open wounds, stripped pieces of skin, broken bones and other deformities. The powers of Inferno fill them up with a stinking, yellow bile that leaks from their orifices and foams around their mouth when they howl. They are calmed, or perhaps distracted, by acts of torture and violence. They calm down, become silent, and stare with fascination at the scene. They may even avoid attacking a victim that hurts themselves Excited purgatides will follow an injured victim to share in their experience.

Abilities

- *Fanatical:* Cannot be reasoned with.
- *Overwhelming attacks:* The howling purgatives attacks with relentless anger and speed. ***Avoid Harm*** and ***Engage in Combat*** in close combat has a modifier of -1.

Combat [2], **Influence** [–], **Magic** [1].

Combat [Considerable]

- Knock down.
- Rush a large distance.

Magic [Novice]

- Mad howls.

Attacks

Circles opponent, howls and shrieks in perverse extacy. Fills their mind with horrible visions. Rushes the opponents, knocks them down, and shreds their bodies while howling and screaming. Normally armed with knives, chopping weapons, or any convenient tools.

Unarmed attack: Knock over [1] [Distance: arm, victim is knocked over]; Bash, tear and bite [2] [Distance: arm, victim must be knocked over].

Edged weapons: Cut up [2] [Distance: arm].

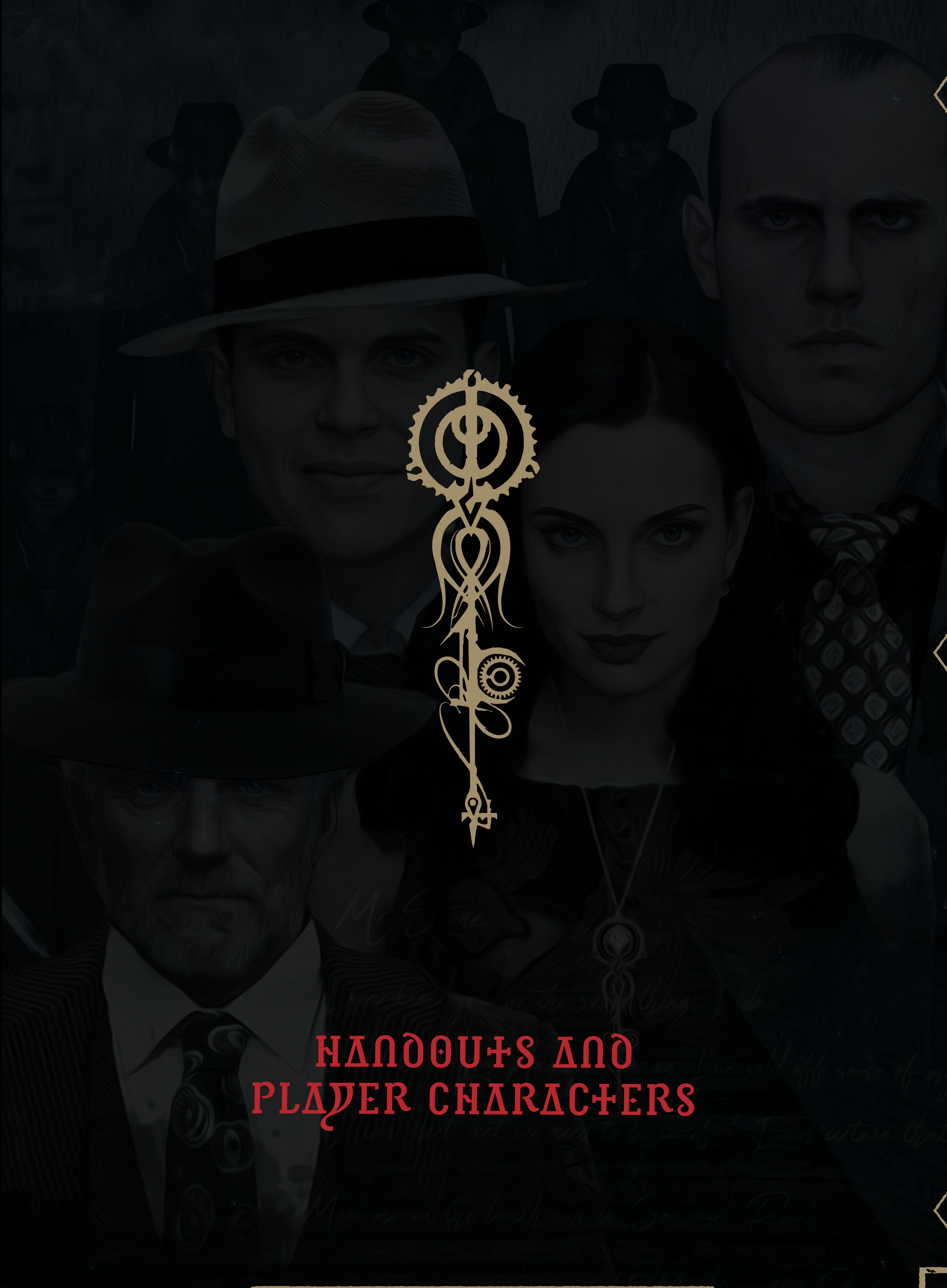
Chopping weapons: Brutal slashing [3] [Distance: arm].

Mad howls: [***Keep it Together*** or -2 on next roll] [Distance: Room].

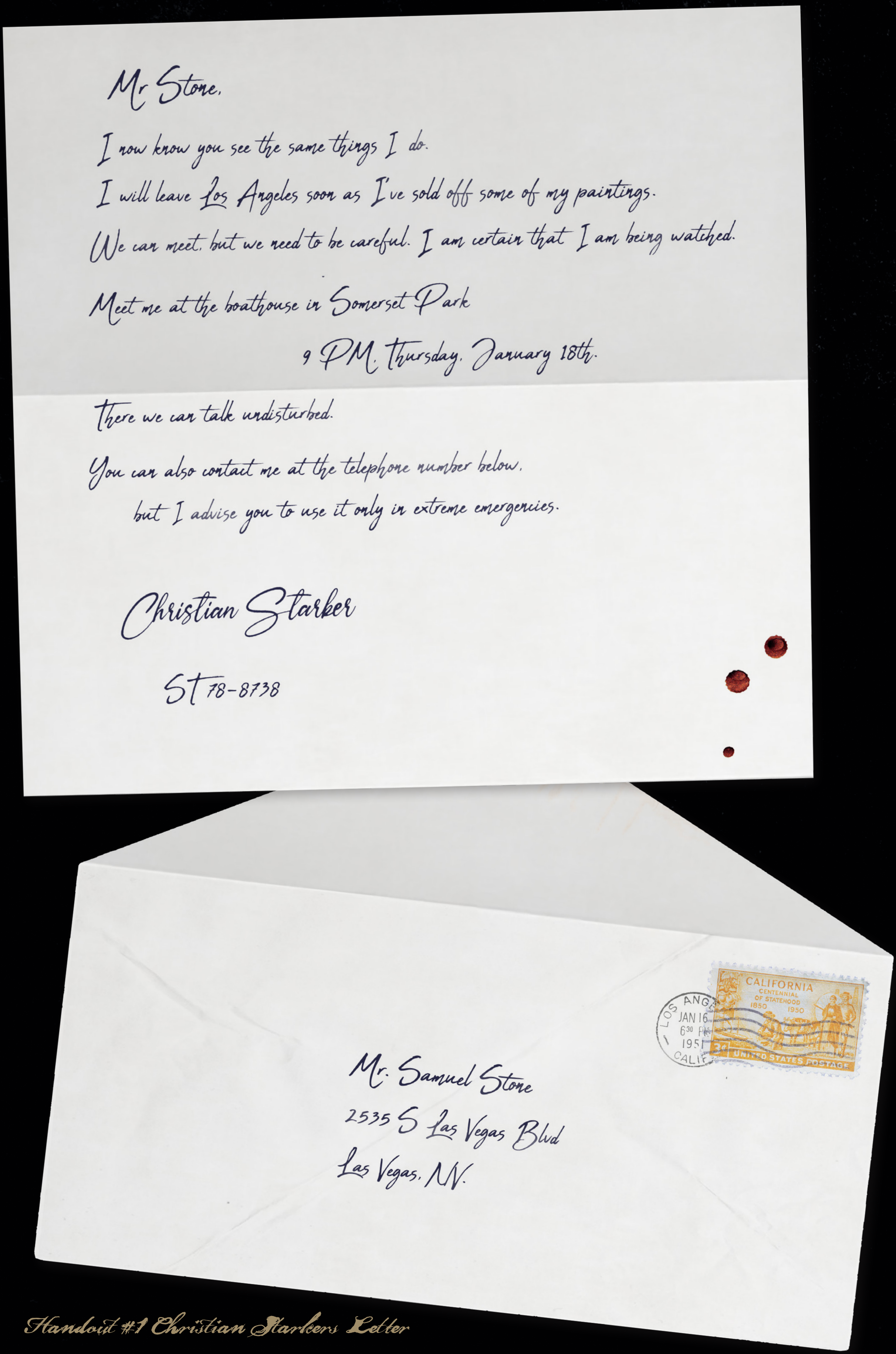
Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○○☠

- Howls in anger, their next attack causes **+1 Harm**.
- Stinking yellow bile spews from their mouth as they shriek.
- Shakes in spasms (+2 on next attack roll against it)
- **Death**.



HANDOUTS AND PLAYER CHARACTERS



Mr Stone,

I now know you see the same things I do.

I will leave Los Angeles soon as I've sold off some of my paintings.

We can meet, but we need to be careful. I am certain that I am being watched.

Meet me at the boathouse in Somerset Park

9 PM, Thursday, January 18th.

There we can talk undisturbed.

You can also contact me at the telephone number below,

but I advise you to use it only in extreme emergencies.

Christian Starker

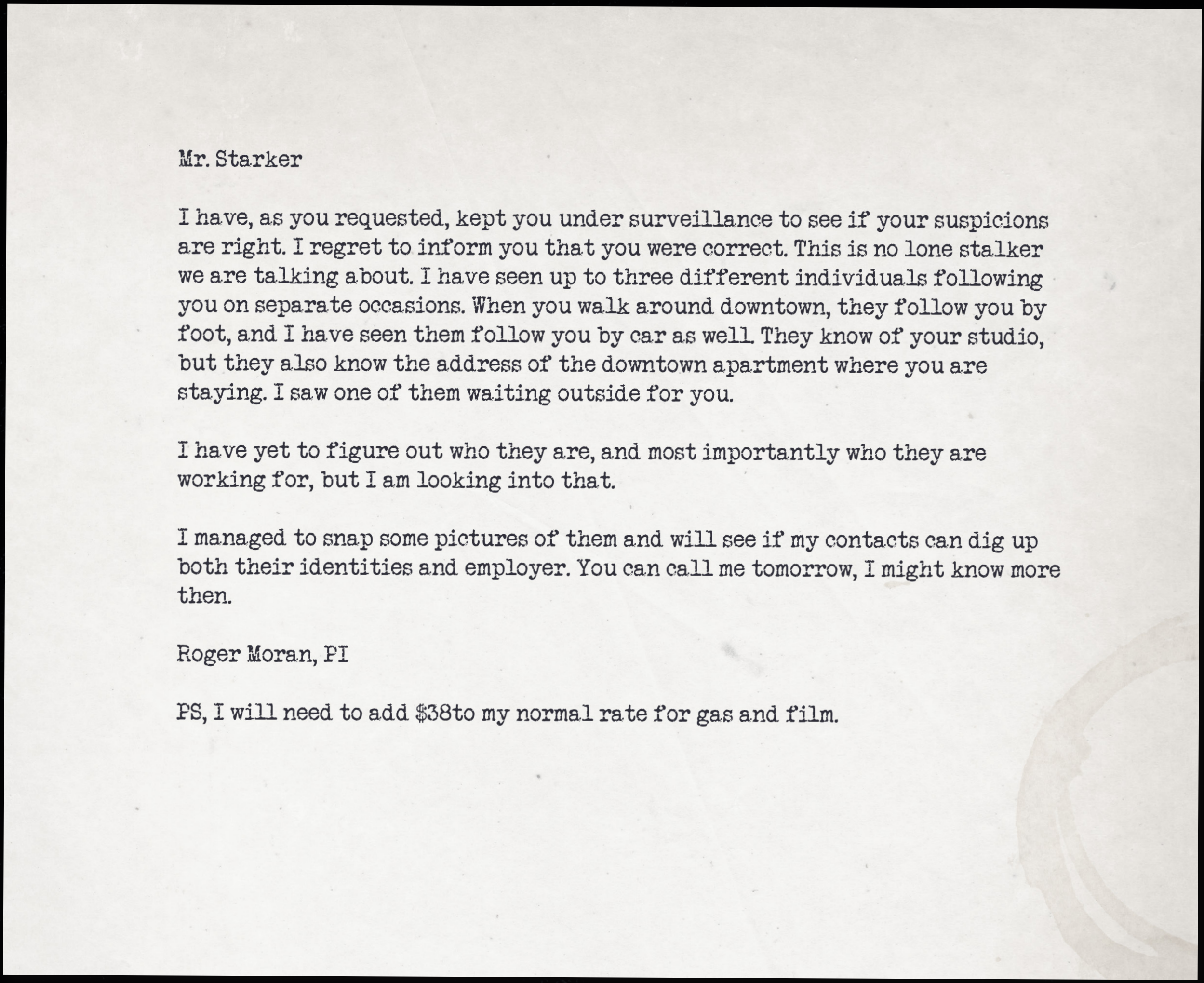
ST 78-8738

LOS ANGELES
JAN 16
6³⁰ PM
1951
CALIF

CALIFORNIA
CENTENNIAL
OF STATEHOOD
1850 1950
3¢
UNITED STATES POSTAGE

Mr. Samuel Stone
2535 S Las Vegas Blvd
Las Vegas, NV.

Handout #1 Christian Starkers Letter



Mr. Starker

I have, as you requested, kept you under surveillance to see if your suspicions are right. I regret to inform you that you were correct. This is no lone stalker we are talking about. I have seen up to three different individuals following you on separate occasions. When you walk around downtown, they follow you by foot, and I have seen them follow you by car as well. They know of your studio, but they also know the address of the downtown apartment where you are staying. I saw one of them waiting outside for you.

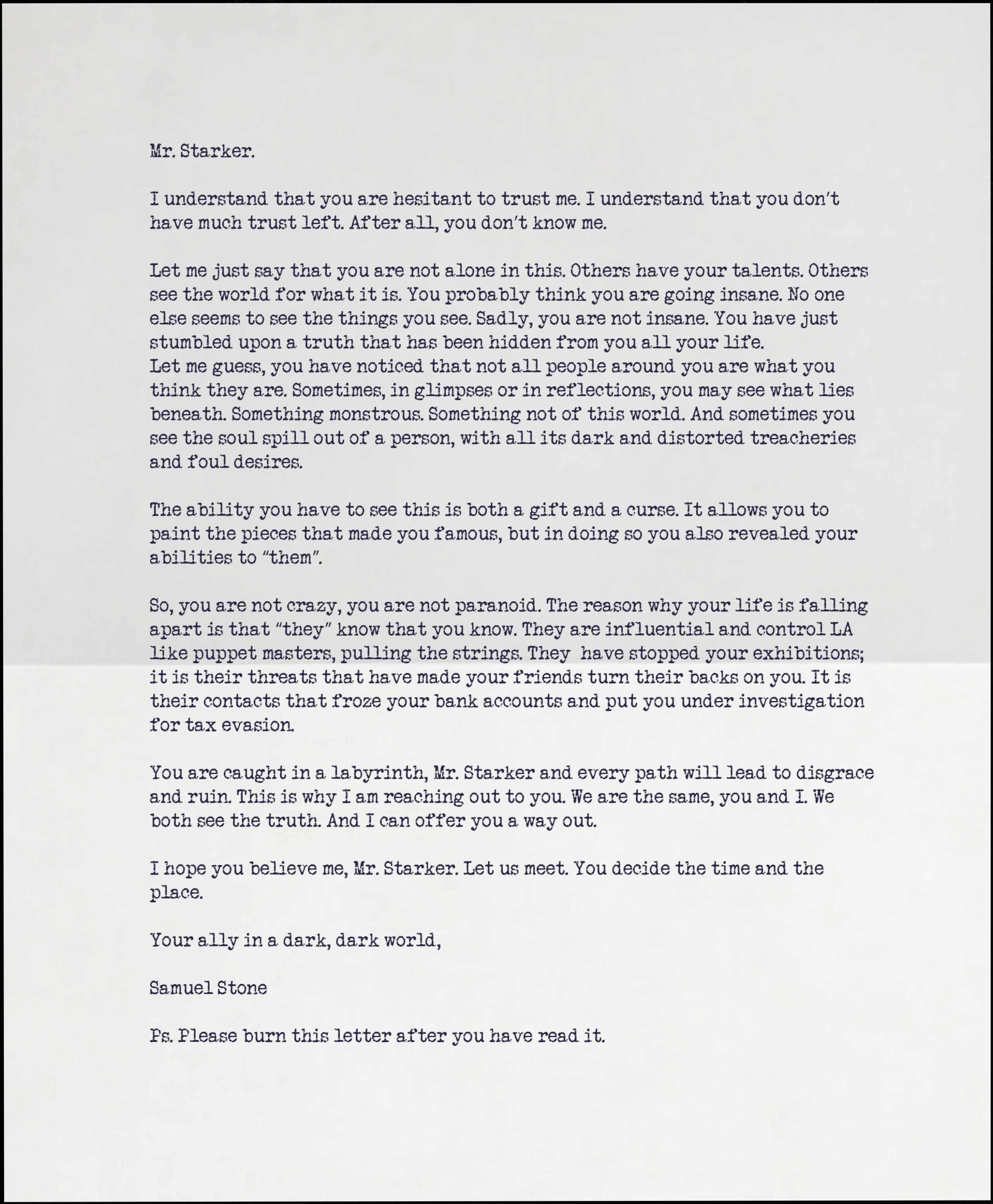
I have yet to figure out who they are, and most importantly who they are working for, but I am looking into that.

I managed to snap some pictures of them and will see if my contacts can dig up both their identities and employer. You can call me tomorrow, I might know more then.

Roger Moran, PI

PS, I will need to add $38to my normal rate for gas and film.

Handout #2 Roger Moran's Letter



Mr. Starker.

I understand that you are hesitant to trust me. I understand that you don't have much trust left. After all, you don't know me.

Let me just say that you are not alone in this. Others have your talents. Others see the world for what it is. You probably think you are going insane. No one else seems to see the things you see. Sadly, you are not insane. You have just stumbled upon a truth that has been hidden from you all your life.
Let me guess, you have noticed that not all people around you are what you think they are. Sometimes, in glimpses or in reflections, you may see what lies beneath. Something monstrous. Something not of this world. And sometimes you see the soul spill out of a person, with all its dark and distorted treacheries and foul desires.

The ability you have to see this is both a gift and a curse. It allows you to paint the pieces that made you famous, but in doing so you also revealed your abilities to "them".

So, you are not crazy, you are not paranoid. The reason why your life is falling apart is that "they" know that you know. They are influential and control LA like puppet masters, pulling the strings. They have stopped your exhibitions; it is their threats that have made your friends turn their backs on you. It is their contacts that froze your bank accounts and put you under investigation for tax evasion.

You are caught in a labyrinth, Mr. Starker and every path will lead to disgrace and ruin. This is why I am reaching out to you. We are the same, you and I. We both see the truth. And I can offer you a way out.

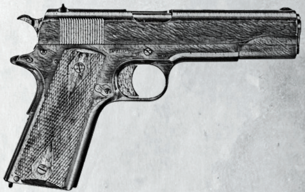
I hope you believe me, Mr. Starker. Let us meet. You decide the time and the place.

Your ally in a dark, dark world,

Samuel Stone

Ps. Please burn this letter after you have read it.

Handout #3 Samuel Stone's Letter



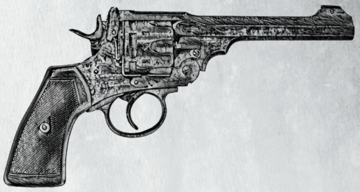
Colt M1911
(Handgun)

Distance: arm/room

Attacks:

- Combat shooting [2] [–1 Ammo]
- Overkill [3] [–2 Ammo]
- Multiple targets [2] [hit up to one additional target] [–3 Ammo]

Ammo: ○○○○



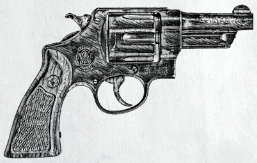
Webley Mk VI
(Handgun)

Distance: arm/room

Attacks:

- Combat shooting [2] [–1 Ammo]
- Overkill [3] [–2 Ammo]
- Multiple targets [2] [hit up to one additional target] [–3 Ammo]

Ammo: ○○○○



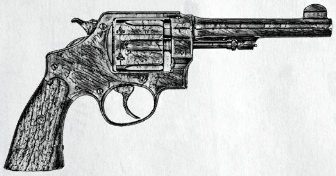
S&W .38 Special
(Handgun)

Distance: arm/room

Attacks:

- Combat shooting [2] [–1 Ammo]
- Overkill [3] [–2 Ammo]
- Multiple targets [2] [hit up to one additional target] [–3 Ammo]

Ammo: ○○○○



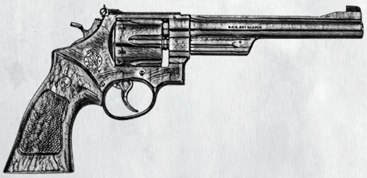
S&W M1917
(Handgun)

Distance: arm/room

Attacks:

- Combat shooting [2] [–1 Ammo]
- Overkill [3] [–2 Ammo]
- Multiple targets [2] [hit up to one additional target] [–3 Ammo]

Ammo: ○○○○



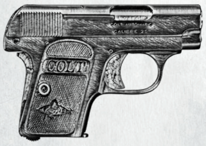
S&W Model 27
(Magnum Handgun)

Distance: arm/room

Attacks:

- Combat shooting [3] [–1 Ammo]
- Overkill [4] [–3 Ammo]

Ammo: ○○○



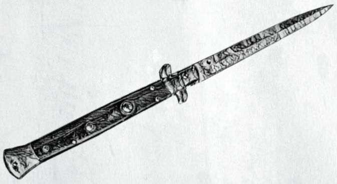
Colt M1908
(Pocket Pistol)

Distance: arm/room

Attacks:

- Combat shooting [2] [–1 Ammo]

Ammo: ○○

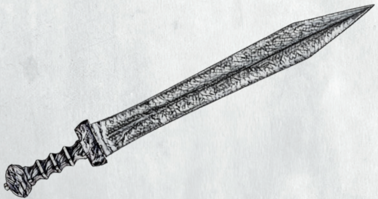


Stiletto
(Edged Weapon)

Distance: arm

Attacks:

- Cut, slice, and stab [2]
- Edge at the throat [0] [you are in control of the target until they break free]

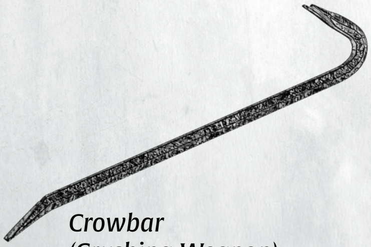


Gladius
(Chopping Weapon)

Distance: arm

Attacks:

- Hack, slash, and chop [2]
- Momentum [1] [may hit one additional target]



Crowbar
(Crushing Weapon)

Distance: arm

Attacks:

- Pummel, maul, and crush [2]
- Knock down [1] [the target falls to the ground]
- Knock out [1] [target is knocked out; PCs must successfully ***Endure Injury*** to avoid getting *knocked out*]

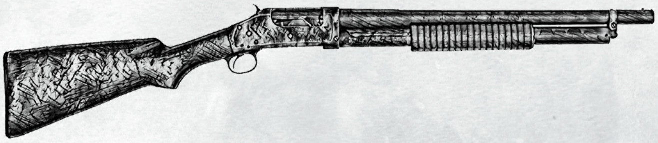
Tommy Gun (Submachine Gun)

Distance: room

Attacks:

- **Short bursts** [2] [–1 Ammo]
- **Focused full auto** [3] [–2 Ammo]
- **Spray and pray** [2] [hit up to two additional targets] [–3 Ammo]

Ammo: ○○○



Winchester M1897 (Combat Shotgun)

Distance: room/field

Attacks:

- **Snapshots** [3/1]* [–1 Ammo]
- **Pellet storm** [3/1]* [small close group all hit at once] [–2 Ammo]

* Base Harm is 3 against target(s) at Room distance, and 1 if beyond.

Ammo: ○○○

M1 Garand (Rifle)

Distance: room/field/horizon

Attacks:

- **Aim & fire** [3] [–1 Ammo]

Ammo: ○○○

Unarmed

Distance: arm

Attacks:

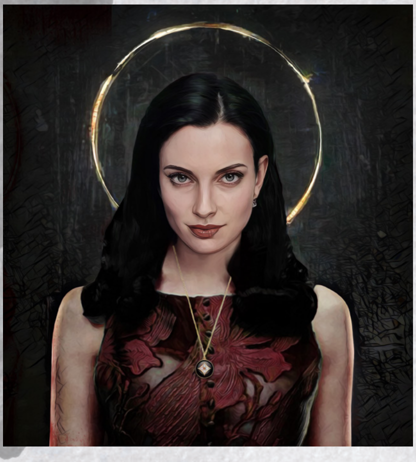
- **Punch, kick, and tear** [1]
- **Lock** [0] [you are in control of the target until they break free]
- **Shift** [0] [you create distance between yourself and the target through a throw, body check, or push]
- **Disarm** [0] [you remove an object your opponent held in their hand]
- **Excessive force** [2] [focus entirely on killing your target, disregarding your own safety]

Sleeping Pills
(Knockout Drug)

Distance: (slipped in a drink).

Attacks:

- **Knockout** [–] [Human NPC target is momentarily *neutralized*, PC target ***Endures Injury*** and is *knocked out* on a **(–9)**].



Lizabeth 'Liza' Bennett

The Deceiver

Notes

Who you are

You are a failed actress turned hostess at the mob-controlled Sahara Casino in Las Vegas. Your boss is Mr. Pickett, and your job is to charm the guests, while making sure that the movie stars, politicians and other VIPs get special treatment. You laugh at their jokes, flirt, give false smiles and promises. You boss the waitresses that serve drinks, cigarettes and their bodies. Your nights are spent among the roulette tables, in the private dining rooms, and at the bar putting the right people in a positive mood so that Mr. Pickett can grease their pockets. You have done things that disgust you, and forced the girls that work for you to do far worse. In Las Vegas it is all about flesh and money, and you try not to think about all the lives you have ruined. To live with yourself, you have learned to switch off your emotions.

You had a stormy marriage with Fred Hayden. You are now divorced, but it resulted in a daughter, Joan. You don't want her to grow up in this environment. You don't want Mr. Pickett to own her as well. It is not only that he is a ruthless criminal, it is something about him that is not... human. His shadow moves strangely and sometimes he seems to swell and distort in front of your eyes. You are afraid of him, of what he is, and of what he might do to you or your daughter.

What you hold dear

You have a daughter, Joan. She is 3 years old and she means the world to you. She lives with you in a fancy suite at the Sahara Casino. Mr. Pickett knows how much you care about her.

Things in your possession

Concealable Colt M1908 Vest Pocket Automatic *(Pocket Pistol)*. Fur lined swing coat. Slim Dior sheath dress. Laced lingerie. Stockings. Black pumps. Rhinestone bracelet. Medallion with a photo of Joan. Gucci Handbag in leather. Make up (Powder, Mascara, Blood red lipstick, etc). Perfume. Pack of Chesterfield Cigarettes. Lighter. Sheik Condom tin with 4 condoms. Pack of Juicy Fruit chewing gum. Cat Eye Sunglasses. Bottle of strong sleeping pills (perfect to slip in a drink). Phone number to movie star Cary Grant on napkin. Purse with 15 USD (about 150 USD in modern currency).

Relation to the other characters

Fred Hayden: [*Relationship 1*] Your ex-husband whom you have a daughter with. You had a passionate marriage but you both gambled, drank, and were unfaithful for different reasons. You still love him, and sometimes you are jealous when he shows off his newest conquest. You know he grew up in a poor family and that he is ashamed of his past.

George Stevenson: [*Relationship 1*] Works as an Accountant for Mr. Pickett. Is from Britain and has a charming accent. He has an insight in the Occult and knows that there is something wrong with Mr. Pickett. He is married to Shannon, a singer at the casino, who was one of Fred's previous conquests. You, following Mr. Pickett's orders, bullied Shannon into marrying George.

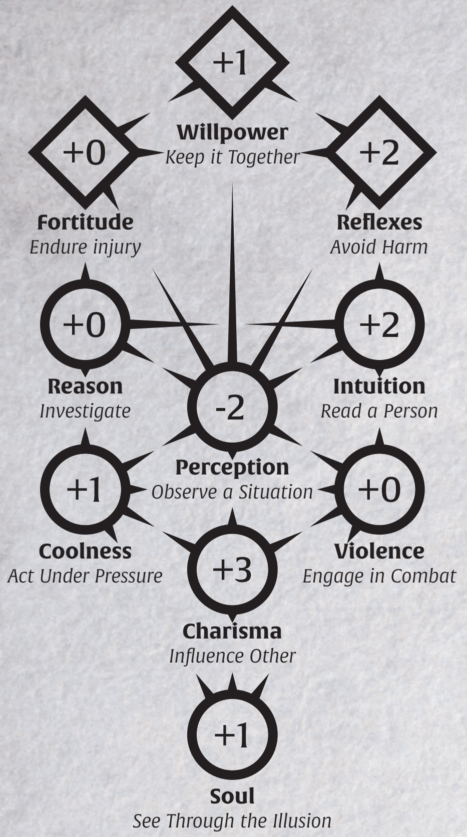
Ray Astor: [*Relationship 0*] Brute that works for Mr. Pickett. He is known to beat up, torture and even murder people. You have noticed his eyes on you and it disgusts you. You don't trust him, but Fred says he is okay.

Dramatic Hooks

Gain 1 **Stability** when you do one of the following things and then cross it out.

- ◇ Share a precious memory of Joan.
- ◇ Develop your relationship with Fred. If worst comes to worst, at least one of you needs to take care of Joan.

Attributes



Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*) Stabilized

☐
☐
☐
☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*) Stabilized

☐

Stability

☐	*Composed*	
☐	*Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐	*Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐	*Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐	*Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐	*Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐	*Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
		+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐	*Broken*	The GM makes a Move

Disadvantages

Object of Desire

There is just something special about you. You ignite deep unhealthy desires in others, which they are unable to keep in check. *At the first game session and whenever you meet one or more new people,* **roll +0**:

(15+) The desire is not awakened at this moment.

(10–14) Someone becomes desirous of you. The GM takes 1 Hold.

(–9) A strong desire is awakened in one or several people. The GM takes 3 Hold.

The GM can spend Hold to ignite a person's desires, influencing their behavior. For example, someone can be afflicted with an uncontrollable passion for you, attempt to force themselves on you, strongly proposition you, become intensely jealous of you, or harm themselves or someone else because of their desire of you.

Advantages

Erotic

Whenever you make moves to attract an NPC to you, **roll +Charisma**:

(15+) Choose up to three options any time during this scene.

(10–14) Choose up to two options any time during this scene.

(–9) Choose one option any time during this scene, but the nature of the attraction is different than you had hoped. The GM makes a Move.

Options:

- The person must have you, and will abandon their normally reasonable behavior to do so.
- The person is distracted by you for as long as you're in the vicinity, unable to concentrate on anything else.
- The person becomes jealous of anyone competing for your attention, and tries to dispose of them by any means necessary.
- You make them uncertain and confused. You take +1 *ongoing* against them during this scene.

Backstab

Whenever you attack someone who's unprepared for it, **roll +Coolness**:

(15+) Choose two options.

(10–14) Choose one option.

(–9) You expose your betrayal and your target gets to react to your attack as usual. The GM makes a Move.

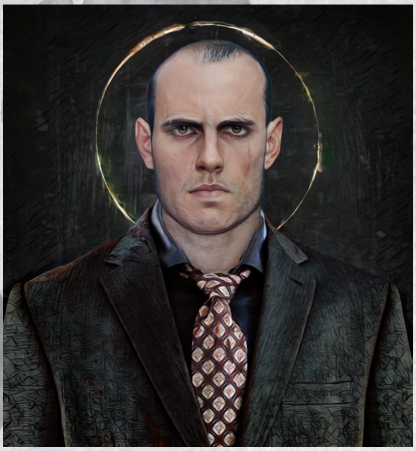
Options:

- *Aim for the sensitive parts:* Deal **+1 Harm**.
- *Knock out:* The NPC is rendered unconcious. PCs roll to ***Endure Injury*** and become neutralized on a **(–9)**.
- *Careful:* You act soundlessly and, if your victim dies, you leave no clues or traces behind.

Endure Trauma

You are not as easily affected by trauma as others. *Whenever you reduce* **Stability**, you always lose 1 fewer level than normal.

This advantage is not from the Deceiver Archetype, it is something she was forced to learn serving under Mr. Pickett.



Ray Astor

The Veteran

Notes

Who you are

You are an enforcer for the Las Vegas mob boss Mr. Pickett. You're a big man, muscular and mean, a monster in a suit. You have a whole life of violence behind you. You were beaten by your dad, but it always felt better when he took out his anger on you instead of mom or your sisters. Mom was always praying, saying that God was testing you all. But you could not see any God. You left your home in West Virginia when you were 13. You took different manual labor jobs. You started boxing and some said you had a shot for the title. But you never took it. You learned that you could earn easy money beating up people for the mob and it seemed like a simple life at the time.

But you're tired. Tired of failed relationships and tired of your trade. Tired of going to your small apartment with blood over your suit and bruised knuckles. Tired of the screams when you break someone's bones or pull their teeth with a set of pliers to get them to pay. You drink to keep the demons away, but sometimes the anxiety overtakes you and you cannot hold it back. You try praying to a God that no longer listens, or drink when you tire of that, but nothing helps. You need to get out, now.

What you hold dear

Your old mother, Annabelle, lives in a small house in Las Vegas you recently bought for her with all your saved up cash. You convinced her to move closer to you when your father died, to give her the comforts of a modern life and some company. You lie to her and say you work in construction.

Things in your possession

Intimidating S&W Model 27 Revolver *(Magnum Handgun)* in Shoulder Holster. Fedora hat. Felt coat. Wrinkled suit (with some blood stains after your last job). Sturdy shoes. Handful of bullets in your pockets (one reload). Brass knuckles. Pair of pliers. Stainless steel hip flask with hard liquor. Silver crucifix on necklace (always kept beneath the clothes). Half smoked pack of Marlboro cigarettes. Pack of Matches. 7 USD in your pockets (about 70 USD in modern currency).

In the car (1946 Dodge 4-Door Sedan): Winchester Model 1897 Riot Shotgun (*Combat shotgun*). S&W .38 Special backup pistol *(Handgun)*. Box with 50 Shotgun Shells. Box with 100 .357 Magnum rounds. Rope. Shovel. Burlap Sack. Pair of flashlights with extra batteries. Can of gasoline. Crowbar. Small crate with 6 Bottles of I.W. Harper Bourbon. Road maps of Nevada and California.

Relation to the other characters

Fred Hayden: [*Relationship 0*] Ex-husband to Lizabeth. Fixer and gambler. You have followed him on several jobs; he does the talking, and you do the punching. You don't like the way he treats Lizabeth, she deserves better. You saved his skin once and he has been sucking up to you ever since.

George Stevenson: [*Relationship 1*] Works as an accountant for Mr. Pickett. He is from Britain, and has this posh and fancy accent you sometimes hear in the movies. You know he served in war and you feel that he cares about you. He seems to know that you are not a bad person at heart.

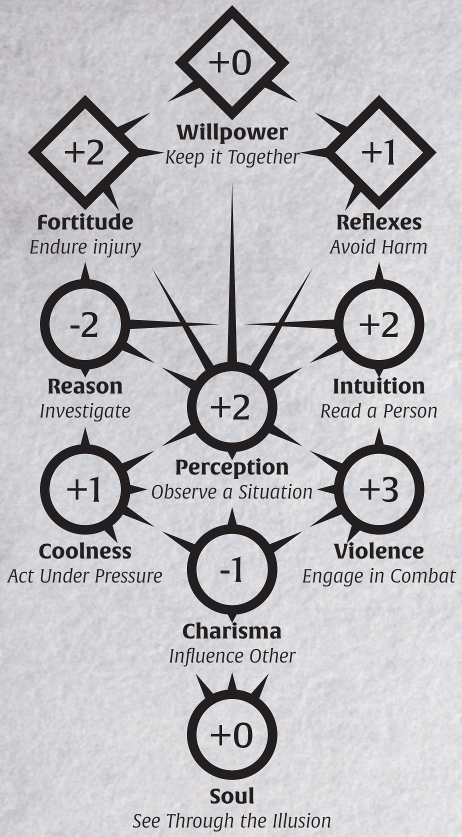
Lizabeth Bennet: [*Relationship 1*] Ex-wife to Fred. She works entertaining the VIPs in the casino. She is beautiful and you wish you could have a chance with her, but you are too far below her standards. She has a young daughter with Fred. You think she should be a movie star. That was her dream once.

Dramatic Hooks

Gain 1 **Stability** when you do one of the following things and then cross it out.

- Show to the others, and to yourself, that you're capable of more than violence.
- Tell Lizabeth how you feel about her.

Attributes


+0
Willpower
Keep it Together
+2
Fortitude
Endure injury
+1
Reflexes
Avoid Harm
-2
Reason
Investigate
+2
Intuition
Read a Person
+2
Perception
Observe a Situation
+1
Coolness
Act Under Pressure
+3
Violence
Engage in Combat
-1
Charisma
Influence Other
+0
Soul
See Through the Illusion

Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐

Stability

☐ *Composed*	
☐ *Uneasy* ☐ *Unfocused*	**Moderate stress:** −1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐ *Shaken* ☐ *Distressed* ☐ *Neurotic*	**Serious stress:** −1 ***Keep it Together*** −2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐ *Anxious* ☐ *Irrational* ☐ *Unhinged*	**Critical stress:** −2 ***Keep it Together*** −3 to Disadvantage rolls +1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐ *Broken*	The GM makes a Move

Disadvantages

Guilt

You carry heavy guilt for your past sins, having harmed one or several people through your actions or inaction. *In the first game session and whenever everything appears okay*, **roll +0**:

(15+) Your guilt isn't on your mind at the moment.

(10–14) You are reminded of your guilt. The GM takes 1 Hold.

(–9) Your guilt catches up to you. The GM takes 3 Hold.

The GM can spend Hold to make Moves for your guilt. For example, relatives of the people you've hurt seek you out, demons and other creatures are attracted by your guilt, the dead haunt you with nightmares or visions, or you fall victim to anxiety and self-doubt.

Advantages

Former Boxer

This is a variation of the advantage Martial Arts Expert. *Whenever you're fighting in close quarters*, **roll +Violence**:

(15+) Get 2 Edges. You may spend them any time during the scene.

(10–14) Get 1 Edge.

(–9) Get 1 Edge, but you underestimate your opponents, who may be more numerous or skilled than you first assumed. The GM makes a Move.

Edges:

- *Quick Feet:* avoid a melee attack.
- *Right Hook:* Deal **+2 Harm**.
- *Knock out:* The NPC is rendered unconscious. PCs roll to ***Endure Injury*** and become neutralized on a **(–9)**.

Survival Instinct

Whenever you suffer a serious or critical injury yet refuse to yield, **roll +Violence**. On a success, you may temporarily ignore the effects of the injuries, but you will need treatment to stabilize them as soon as the time limit expires:

(15+) You ignore your injuries until the conflict is over, as well as choose one:

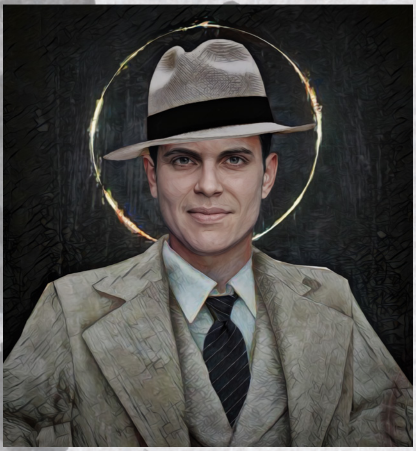
- *Viciousness: +1 ongoing* to ***Engage in Combat*** rolls for the remainder of the fight.
- *Adrenaline rush*: *+1 ongoing* to ***Endure Injury*** rolls for the remainder of the fight.

(10–14) You ignore your injuries until the conflict is over.

(–9) You overexert yourself and after a few moments your injuries cause you to pass out and collapse. After your next action, the GM decides when and how you pass out.

Hardened

You take *+1 ongoing* to ***Endure Injury***.



Fred Hayden

The Fixer

• Notes

• Who you are

You are a gambler, card shark, fixer and forger, a master of making money and a master at spending it. You love fancy suits, betting on horses, expensive lovers and new cars. It has not always been this way. You grew up poor, you often went to sleep hungry, your shoes were filled with holes and your head was crawling with lice. You were a stinking street kid with a mother that was a drunkard who beat you. You stole your way through life. First pickpocketing and then burglary. You learned to cheat at card games, who to trust and who to never cross. You made something of yourself and you despise and try to forget your old life.

Many would say you have it all. You work for the mob boss Mr. Pickett in a Las Vegas casino. You work the floor, expose cheaters and others that might try to rob the casino or disturb Mr. Pickett's business. You had your dreams of taking over, but the business is just too bloody for your taste. You've been thinking of a retirement plan, perhaps as a movie producer in LA.

• What you hold dear

You have a daughter, Joan. She is 3 years old. You spoil her with dresses and toys, but you feel that there is a distance between you.

• Things in your possession

Silver Plated Colt M1911 *(Handgun)* in Shoulder Holster. Stiletto *(Edged Weapon)*. Set of lock picks. Deck of cards. Silk Handkerchief with Initials. Small black book with numbers for lovers and contacts. Ballpoint pen in silver. Hand tailored three piece suit. Silver tie pin. Panama hat. Hand Sewn Leather Shoes. Omega Wrist Watch. Silver Cigarette Case. Matchstick box with the Sahara Casino Logo. Wallet with 125 USD (about 1250 USD in modern currency).

• Relation to the other characters

George Stevenson: [*Relationship 0*] Accountant of Mr. Pickett. He is from Britain and is a genius with numbers. Married to Shannon, a singer at the hotel, with whom you once had an intimate relationship. You don't think George knows about your history. You also know that Mr. Pickett pressured Shannon into marrying George.

Liza (Lizabeth) Bennet: [*Relationship 1*] Ex wife. You had a few good years and a daughter with her, Joan. You still care for Liza and try to protect her. You also know she has a jealous nature and sometimes you like to sleep with one of her girls just to rub it in.

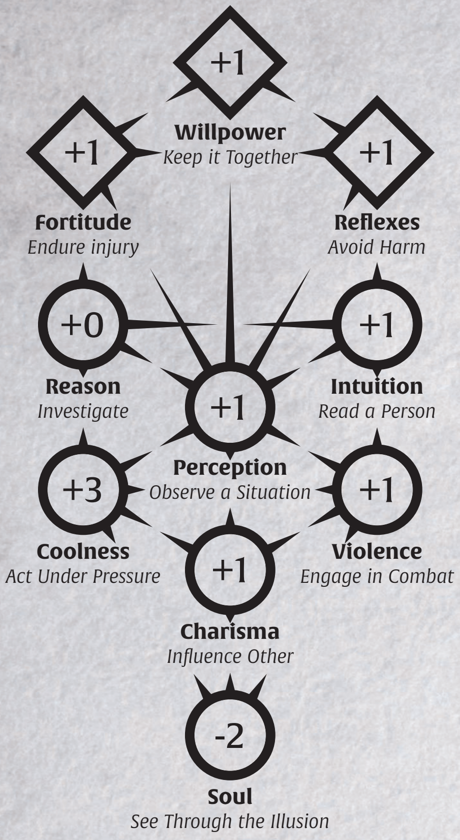
Ray Astor: [*Relationship 1*] Enforcer and bonebreaker, good to have on your side in a fight. Simple and trustworthy and not someone you want to have as your enemy. He saved your life once when you were against the wall, and you feel you need to repay him.

• Dramatic Hooks

Gain 1 **Stability** when you do one of the following things and then cross it out.

- Tell Liza about your plans to get away from Mr. Pickett.
- Reveal to George that you slept with Shannon.

Attributes



Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*)	Stabilized
	☐

Stability

☐ *Composed*	
☐ *Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐ *Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐ *Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐ *Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐ *Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐ *Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐ *Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐ *Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
	+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐ *Broken*	The GM makes a Move

Disadvantages

Greedy

You are driven by an unquenchable desire for money and wealth, and are prepared to sacrifice your health, family, and friends to fill the emptiness inside. *When an opportunity to increase your wealth arises,* **roll +0** to see if you are in control of your desire:

(15+) You keep your greed in check.

(10–14) The black void inside shrieks for more. As long as the opportunity exists and you do not take it, you suffer *−1 ongoing* to any rolls you make.

(–9) You must take advantage of every opportunity to further your wealth, or reduce **Stability (−2)**.

Advantages

Burglar

Whenever you make use of your expertise in breaking and entering, **roll +Coolness**:

(15+) Get three options. You may spend them any time during the scene.

(10–14) Get two options. You may spend them any time during the scene.

(–9) Get one option, but a problem arises. The GM makes a Move.

Options:

- You silently open a locked door within a few moments.
- You neutralize an alarm.
- You bust a lockbox or safe in less than two minutes.
- You avoid being discovered by someone.
- Trick someone into believing you belong here (e.g., pretend you're a security guard) for a limited time.

This advantage is not part of the Fixer Archetype, it comes from his background as a burglar.

Ace up the Sleeve

Whenever someone's got you up against the wall or in a tight spot, **roll +Coolness**:

(15+) Get 2 Edges. You may spend them any time during the scene.

(10–14) Get 1 Edge. You may spend it at any time during the scene.

(–9) Get 1 Edge, but the situation is worse than you imagined. The GM makes a Move.

Edges:

- You have a small, concealed lethal weapon (stiletto or similar), which you can produce unnoticed.
- You realize your opponent has a weakness you can exploit (take *+2 to your next roll*, if it involves exploiting the weakness). Ask the GM what it is.
- You spot a way out. Ask the GM what it is. Take *+2 to your next roll* to make use of it.

Streetwise

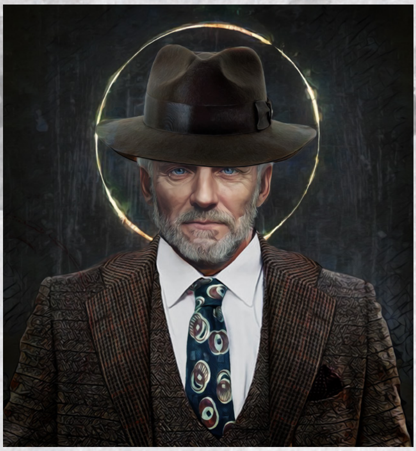
Whenever you want to acquire items or services from the criminal underworld, **roll +Charisma**:

(15+) No problem – you get what you're after. Someone will fix you right up.

(10–14) The GM chooses one option:

- It will cost you something extra, such as in-kind services, tasks, or an inflated price.
- You can get it handled, but only by dealing with someone you're already indebted to.
- "Shit, I had one, but I just let it go to [insert name] – maybe you can buy it from her?"
- "Sorry, that's a bit outside of my area, but maybe this will work instead?"

(–9) You think you find what you're looking for, but there will be costly stipulations, considerable flaws, or major complications. The GM makes a Move.



George Stevenson

The Cursed

Notes

Who you are

You work as an accountant and bookkeeper for the Las Vegas Mob Boss Mr. Pickett. You grew up in a well-off London family, went to boarding school, and studied at Oxford. You fought in WWI in the trenches at Somme, and there you experienced terrifying and strange things. It was as if a veil was lifted from your eyes and you stared into another reality. This awakened an occult interest that continued to this day. During WWII you served as an intelligence officer, but you were dishonorably discharged after a public espionage trial. You lost everything: wife, family and friends.

You travelled to the USA with the last of your savings. Mr. Pickett offered you a job as an accountant, and you moved to Las Vegas. You have always been good with numbers and know how to turn dirty money clean. Mr. Pickett introduced you to Shannon, a young singer at the casino, and she is now your wife and mother of your children. Things could have been good, but then you got the results from the doctor. The coughs are not bronchitis, you have terminal lung cancer. To add insult to injury, your employer, Mr. Pickett, has a strange aura to him. In fact, you are now certain that he is somehow touched or corrupted by some unseen, supernatural, force. You need to get your family out of Las Vegas and see to it that they are provided for.

What you hold dear

You are married to Shannon, a singer at the Sahara Casino. She is young enough to be your daughter and you sometimes wonder what she sees in you. Perhaps it is your British accent and posh manners? You also have twin sons, James and William. Both of them are just under a year old.

Things in your possession

Trusted Webley Revolver *(Handgun)* in shoulder holster. Three piece tweed suit. Fedora hat. An old pocket watch that you inherited from your father. Comb. Royal Crown Pomade. Handkerchief stained with blood. Pendulum (said to react to mystical energies). Ballpoint pen and notebook. Tin box with opioid painkillers. Bottle with opium tincture that ease the coughs. Wallet with: Gun license, a photo of your family, an old and torn photo of you and the men you served with at Somme, and 37 USD (about 370 USD in modern currency).

Relation to the other characters

Fred Hayden: [*Relationship 0*] Slimy fixer for Mr. Pickett. Spends money on trinkets and toys and wants to be a big shot. Behaves like a spoiled brat. Always chases women and shows them off as trophies before he dumps them. Ex-husband of Lizabeth, and you can understand why she left him.

Lizabeth Bennet: [*Relationship 1*] Works as a hostess at the casino, entertaining the guests. Ex-wife of Fred and they have a young daughter from their marriage. Miss Bennet, like you, understands there is something strange about Mr. Pickett.

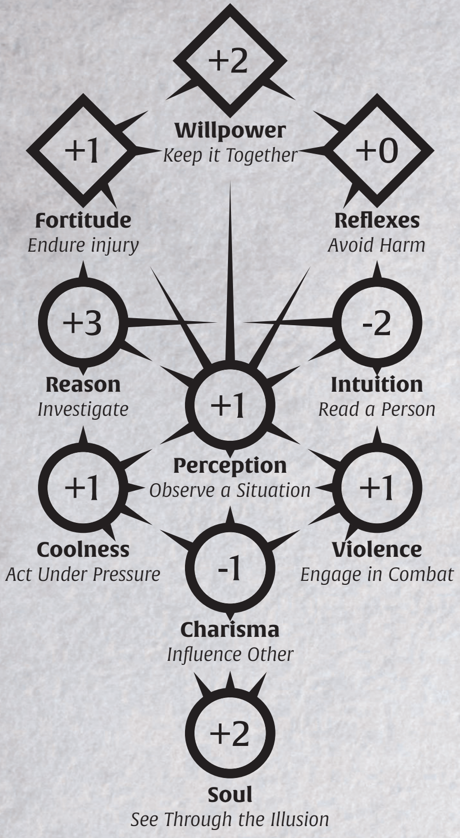
Ray Astor: [Relationship 1] Brute used to beat up and threaten enemies of Mr. Pickett. Most people are afraid of him, but you are not. You see in him the same pain and anxiety that you and your friends experienced after the war.

Dramatic Hooks

Gain 1 **Stability** when you do one of the following things and then cross it out.

- ◇ Support Ray when he needs it. You're the only one that sees his pain.
- ◇ Let your military background come out and take charge of a pressured situation.

Attributes


+2
Willpower
Keep it Together
+1
Fortitude
Endure injury
+0
Reflexes
Avoid Harm
+3
Reason
Investigate
-2
Intuition
Read a Person
+1
Perception
Observe a Situation
+1
Coolness
Act Under Pressure
+1
Violence
Engage in Combat
-1
Charisma
Influence Other
+2
Soul
See Through the Illusion

Wounds

Serious Wounds (−1 *ongoing*) Stabilized

☐

☐

☐

☐

Critical Wound (−1 *ongoing*) Stabilized

☐

Stability

☐ *Composed*	
☐ *Uneasy*	**Moderate stress:**
☐ *Unfocused*	−1 to Disadvantage rolls
☐ *Shaken*	**Serious stress:**
☐ *Distressed*	−1 ***Keep it Together***
☐ *Neurotic*	−2 to Disadvantage rolls
☐ *Anxious*	**Critical stress:**
☐ *Irrational*	−2 ***Keep it Together***
☐ *Unhinged*	−3 to Disadvantage rolls
	+1 ***See Through the Illusion***
☐ *Broken*	The GM makes a Move

Disadvantages

Condemned

Time: ○○○○○○○○○○○

Your fate has already been sealed. You have been diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. *At the start of every game session,* **roll +0**:

(15+) You still have some time remaining.

(10–14) Your fate approaches. The GM chooses one of the following options:

- The player marks 1 Time.
- You're tortured by dreams or visions of your fate. Reduce **Stability (−2)**.
- Someone in your vicinity is negatively affected by your fate.
- Something provides you with false hope of escaping your fate

(–9) Your end approaches. The GM holds two options from the list above *or* marks 2 Time.

When you finally run out of Time, you meet your ultimate fate.

Advantages

Occult Studies

You are a student of the occult. *Upon coming in contact with a magical discipline, entity, or phenomenon for the first time,* **roll +Reason**:

(15+) Take both options below.

(10–14) Choose one option.

(–9) You have a hazy memory of something like this, but can't say for sure if it's true or not. The GM explains what it is you remember.

Options:

- I know something about this (ask the GM what you know and take +1 *ongoing* while acting on the answers during this scene).
- I know where I can find more information about this (ask the GM where).

Genius

Whenever you find yourself in a life-threatening situation, **roll +Soul** to see if you can discover a way out:

(15+) Choose up to three Edges, useable any time in the scene, while you're still in danger.

(10–14) Choose up to two Edges, useable any time in the scene, while you're still in danger.

(–9) Choose one Edge, but you also attract unwanted attention. The GM makes a Move.

Edges:

- *Logical:* You realize an effective way to dispose of the threat. Deal **+1 Harm** whenever you exploit it.
- *Quick thinker:* You realize how to protect yourself from Harm. Treat it as if you'd rolled a **(15+)** on ***Avoid Harm*** whenever you exploit it.
- *Rational:* You realize how to save yourself by sacrificing someone else. Pick the person you utilize to escape the threat.

This advantage is not part of the Cursed archetype, it comes from his experiences in the heat of battle.

To the Last Breath

When you refuse to give in even if the odds turn against you, mark 1 Time to reroll the dice.